

Israel seizes 4,000 PLO passports

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli officials seized 4,080 unauthorised passports issued by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) just before they were smuggled out to Jordan on Thursday for Palestinian pilgrims bound for Mecca, the army said. The passports, seized by Israeli officials at the King Hussein Bridge, bore the names and photographs of residents of Arab East Jerusalem and still-occupied areas of the West Bank, an army spokeswoman said. "We see this as a sharp violation of the (1993 Israeli-PLO) accord on self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, which allows the Palestinian Authority to issue passports only to residents of the self-rule areas," said the spokeswoman for Oren Shahor, army policy chief for the occupied territories. She said the passports were confiscated from a representative of the Islamic trust which oversees Muslim sites and religious affairs in Jerusalem. She said the representative tried to smuggle the passports to Jordan "to distribute them there to residents of the West Bank and Jerusalem making the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia." PLO officials were not immediately available for comment.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
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Jordan praised at ophthalmology meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, president of the Jordanian Eye Bank Friends Society, returned home on Friday after heading Jordan's delegation to the third Arab ophthalmology conference held in Marrakesh, Morocco under the patronage of King Hassan II. Prince Ra'd, who chaired several sessions at the conference, said the Jordanian delegation presented several papers at the conference on Jordan's achievements in ophthalmology. Participants in the conference praised Jordan's experience in the field of making available corneas to those needing them. On the sidelines of the conference, Prince Ra'd said he met with Secretary General of the Arab Ophthalmologists Council Prince Abdul Aziz Ben Ahmad Ben Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia and discussed fields of cooperation between Jordan and Saudi Arabia. He said he also met with the Moroccan health minister and the governor of Marrakesh. The conference presented Prince Ra'd and Prince Abdul Aziz the council's shield in appreciation of their efforts in helping the blind in both Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

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Pharmacists elect association head

AMMAN (Petra) — Abdul Rahim Issa was elected Friday as president of the Jordan Pharmacists Association for a two-year term. Three pharmacists were competing for the president's post, which Mr. Issa won after scoring 475 votes in the second round of elections which took place on Friday. The runners-up won 284 votes while the third candidate won 232 votes. The number of eligible voters for the elections were 1,520.

Israel TV reports Saffi 'infiltration'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Armed men sneaked into Israel on Friday and threatened factory workers with a pistol before a security guard opened fire and wounded him, television reports said. The army said it was checking the incident. Second Channel TV said the infiltrator was a 19-year-old who came from the town of Ghor Saffi and sneaked across the border just south of the Dead Sea. The report said the infiltrator planned to carry out an attack in Israel. The man entered a magnesium factory near the desert city of Sodom and threatened workers with his pistol, the report said. The workers ran away and alerted a security guard who opened fire, shooting the man in the leg.

Rabin: Satellite to improve intelligence

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel launched its Ofek-3 satellite last week because it needs better intelligence in the face of growing extremism, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in remarks published Friday. "We wanted to reach the ability of a satellite that can give us information," Mr. Rabin told the Haaretz daily in an interview. It is widely believed that Ofek-3 is a spy satellite, though Israel never acknowledged this. Ofek reportedly passes over some of Arab countries, including Syria and Iraq. Mr. Rabin said Israel needed to think ahead in a changing Middle East. "I don't know what kind of situations we will face in the future, where the enemies will be, whether they will necessarily be enemies who are close by," Mr. Rabin said. He cited as an example the possibility that Algeria, which has taken some steps in the nuclear field, could come under militant rule. "If there won't be international activity against extremist Islam, I want to have a potential in the field of intelligence, beyond what we can achieve with our current means," Mr. Rabin said. "At least we will have the potential to make decisions that can be implemented in a short period of time."

Shah's son wants Israel's help

TEL AVIV (AP) — The late Shah of Iran's eldest son, Reza Pahlavi, has called for Israeli help to topple the Islamic government in his country. Yediot Aharonot reported Friday, "Israel can convince Arab countries with which it has made peace and other countries to support our action against the ayatollahs' regime," the exiled prince told the paper in an interview. Persian broadcasts on Israeli radio could play an important role because many Iranians listen to Israel's news programmes, he said. Reza Pahlavi said he had met Israeli officials but declined to name them.

Manila turns over suspect to U.S.

MANILA (R) — The Philippines has handed over to the United States a foreigner reportedly linked to the alleged brains of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York, President Fidel Ramos said on Friday. The suspect, Abdul Hakim Murad, was turned over to U.S. officials in Manila on Wednesday to face trial in the United States.

U.N. approves limited Iraq oil sales plan

Aziz criticises U.S. role, but does not reject proposal outright

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Iraq on Friday gained U.N. permission to sell oil to buy food, medicine and other supplies for its people who are suffering under United Nations sanctions.

Iraq immediately raised doubts that it would accept the offer, accusing the United States of blocking a "workable" approach. But it did not reject the plan outright. The U.N. Security Council unanimously approved a draft resolution on the oil plan, which constitutes a temporary lifting of some sanctions.

If Baghdad accepts the renewable plan, it would mark the first major breach in the wall of crippling sanctions erected after Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The resolution was drafted by the United States and Britain and also sponsored by Argentina, Oman and Rwanda.

American U.N. envoy Madeline Albright, speaking after the vote, stressed the resolution was "not a lifting of the sanctions on the Iraqi regime, but a humanitarian exception to the sanctions for the benefit of the Iraqi people."

If Iraq refused to implement the scheme, she added, it would only be because it "does not know to take yes for an answer."

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz said efforts

"to reach a resolution that could be workable and clear of biased political motivations have been blocked by the U.S."

He accused the United States of conducting a "public relations campaign" while actually seeking to keep sanctions on Iraq and infringing on its sovereignty.

In a statement issued at the United Nations, Mr. Aziz also accused Washington of rushing Security Council negotiations on the plan.

"I regret that the positive and sincere efforts we made throughout the last 10 days, and the efforts made by a significant number of the members of the council to reach a resolution that could be workable and clear of biased political motivations have been blocked by the United States," Mr. Aziz said.

"It is quite clear to the members of the council that the United States did not intend in pushing this resolution to help alleviate the humanitarian hardships in Iraq."

The U.S. exercise was on the one hand a public relations campaign, and on the other a deliberate effort to jeopardise the prospects of lifting the whole economic sanctions and to infringe on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

"It was also quite clear to the members of the council that this resolution was

rushed against the will of the majority in the council in order to undermine the constructive and sincere discussions that were developing in the council to solve major issues in a manner that would have produced a text serving the declared purpose without any biased political motivations.

"The United States bears the full responsibility for preventing the council from reaching that result."

The U.N. offer aims to deflect criticism by Iraq and other countries that ordinary Iraqis are suffering from the sanctions.

Chances for lifting sanctions, which include a ban on oil sales, dimmed this after U.N. weapons inspectors said Iraq may be making germ warfare agents.

But Italian Ambassador Francesco Fulci told the council that a suffering child in Iraq is "no different" than one in Somalia — both deserve humanitarian relief.

Oil, to be sold at fair market value, would begin flowing only after Secretary-General Boutros Ghali reports on negotiations with Iraq on details of the plan.

These would cover arrangements for U.N. monitoring of the oil deals and to ensure that food, medicine and other essentials bought with some of the proceeds reach all sectors of the Iraqi people.

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Turkey will quit Iraq in weeks, Inonu says

VOULIAGMENI, Greece (Agencies) — Turkish Foreign Minister Erdal Inonu said on Friday Turkey would pull out of northern Iraq in a matter of weeks.

"It's a matter of weeks. How many I don't know. We will leave when the objective is achieved," he told a news conference while attending an international meeting in Greece.

Turkey has been under pressure from its Western allies to give a date for the end of its military operation against Kurdish guerrillas in northern Iraq, now in its 36th day.

"The state must protect its citizens. It can't tell its citizens 'we can't protect you because our friends are protesting'," Mr. Inonu told reporters on the sidelines of a meeting of the 11-member Black Sea economic cooperation group.

U.S. officials have said Turkey should announce a date for withdrawal from northern Iraq before Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller leaves for the United States on Saturday. She meets President Bill Clinton on Wednesday.

Turkish troops on Friday killed 19 Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels in northern Iraq and at least nine in eastern Turkey, military officials reported.

Anatolian news agency quoted the army's general staff as saying 19 PKK rebels were killed in northern Iraq and that over the past 24 hours two soldiers had been killed and two wounded.

The military report said 446 PKK rebels had been killed and 12 captured since Turkey launched its cross-border operation on March 20. It did not give figures for overall army casualties. Officials on Thursday said 43 soldiers had died since March 20.

Military officials in eastern Turkey told reporters that nine guerrillas were killed and five Turkish soldiers wounded in fierce clashes in Turkey's Tunceli province on Friday. They said five members of

the PKK were killed and five soldiers were wounded in a clash near Hozat Town. Six Turkish helicopters struck rebel positions despite heavy rain.

Witnesses said hundreds of troops were moved to the region from Tunceli town.

Four PKK guerrillas were killed in a clash near Ovacik town, the officials said.

There was no independent confirmation of the reports. PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan warned Iraqi Kurdish factions Friday not to strike deals with Ankara and vowed that his forces would wage a guerrilla war against Turkish troops from mountain strongholds in northern Iraq.

In an interview with the Arabic daily Al Sharq Al Awsat, Mr. Ocalan criticised "certain Kurdish factions in northern Iraq which are dealing with Ankara," notably the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) led by Massud Barzani.

Mr. Ocalan said he hoped "Barzani does not fall into the trap set by Turkey to push him into 'divide and rule'." He was speaking in the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon.

Mr. Ocalan also dismissed as "lies" Turkish claims that its troops had destroyed all PKK bases in northern Iraq.

"Our fighters are deploying in strategic mountains to wage a guerrilla war against Turkish troops," he said, adding that the Turkish forces had "reached some of our positions on the plains with their tanks."

Mr. Ocalan also told the Arabic daily Al Hayat that he was ready for "unconditional dialogue for a political solution" with Turkey, but was equally ready for a "Jihad" or holy war against Ankara.

The PKK leader said he favoured "a voluntary federation or any other negotiable plan."

But if violations of the Kurds' national rights continued they would be "justified in conducting a jihad in the name of humanity and Islam."

Israeli soldier wounded in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — An Israeli soldier was seriously wounded Friday when Hizbollah guerrillas fired mortars at his position in South Lebanon, Israel's proxy militia said.

The soldier was flown by helicopter to a hospital in northern Israel after the attack in Rihaan in the central sector of Israel's self-declared "security zone," the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia said.

A dozen mortar shells landed on or around the Israeli position.

In a statement issued in Beirut Hizbollah said its fighters fired at "enemy concentrations in Rihaan and inflicted casualties among their ranks."

Meanwhile, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) came under harsh criticism Friday after some of its officers attended joint military exercises by Israeli troops and SLA militiamen.

Hizbollah said the presence of U.N. officers at the drills "contradicted the mandate of these (UNIFIL) forces to help Lebanon and its government to end the occupation."

Haj Hussein Al Khalil, chief of Hizbollah's political bureau, said the development was tantamount to an "international legitimisation of the occupation."

Israeli troops and SLA militiamen Tuesday staged war games inside the "security zone."

Tanks, helicopter gunships and field artillery were used in the one-hour manoeuvres in the foothills of Mount Hermon.

UNIFIL spokesman Timur Goksel said only two junior officers of UNIFIL's Norwegian battalion attended the exercises on their own initiative without U.N. authorisation.

"It's not a shift in policy," he told the Associated Press by telephone.



Israeli soldiers check their weapons at a closure of Palestinian territories ahead of a Bethlehem roadblock as they impose a total Jewish holiday (AFP photo)

Arafat cool to truce, says all must respect Oslo deal

GAZA (Agencies) — Members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Hamas from Gaza agreed to a truce on Friday but PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat refused to accept it without a Hamas commitment to stop attacks on Israelis from Palestinian self-rule areas.

"If there is to be an agreement between all factions, Hamas would have to agree not to carry out attacks from self-rule areas," a PLO official told Reuters.

Mr. Arafat also insisted that Hamas and Islamic Jihad drop their opposition to his 1993 Oslo peace agreement with Israel.

"This is a new development for the worse," said Hamas member Imad Falouji. "If we reach an

agreement with the authority it will not mean we will respect the Oslo agreement," he told Reuters.

Mr. Arafat, who heads the self-rule authority in Gaza and Jericho, was visibly angry when he talked to reporters hours after receiving a joint communiqué issued after the PLO-Hamas meeting.

"Nothing has been reached at all," he said.

"First of all, they have to respect what has been agreed upon," he told reporters.

"This peace agreement (with Israel) was signed in the name of the PLO as the sole representative of Palestinians everywhere and every organisation has to respect it."

Mr. Arafat also said the target date set by the PLO and Israel for reaching an

agreement on an Israeli troop pullout from West Bank towns was the "last chance" for the two sides.

"We have some promises that June will be the date (when agreement will be reached)," he said. "June is not so far. We gave many chances, and June is the last chance."

Israel insists that the target date agreed on is July 1, not June.

Hamas leader Mahmoud Al Zahar and about 20 members of his organisation and other opposition factions took part in the 90-minute meeting with Fateh leaders to hand him the draft.

However, Islamic Jihad was absent as most of its

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Rabin ready to remove colonies as part of final agreement

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel will dismantle some Jewish settlements in its final peace accord with the Palestinians, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in an interview published Friday.

Mr. Rabin has been reluctant to talk about his plans for the West Bank and Gaza Strip under a final peace agreement with the Palestinians. His statements Friday marked the first time he spoke about dismantling Jewish settlements in such an accord.

Talks on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza are scheduled to begin in 1996. However, implementation of stage two of the five-year interim phase — Israeli troop withdrawal from West Bank towns and Palestinian elections — has been delayed

because of a rash of attacks by militants on Israelis.

In opinion poll released Friday showed that most Israelis want to halt or suspend the autonomy negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) after a double suicide-bombing in Gaza.

The Dahaf institute poll in Yediot Aharonot newspaper said 38 per cent wanted a halt to the peace process and 31 per cent a suspension.

Only 30 per cent backed Mr. Rabin's decision to plough on with the negotiations while one per cent gave no opinion, showed the poll of 507 people.

The poll, with a margin of error of four per cent, was carried out on Tuesday and Wednesday after the attacks near two Jewish settlements in Gaza which killed eight

Israeli people on Sunday.

Fifty-three per cent were against dismantling the two settlements, Netzarim and Kfar Darom, while 40 per cent were in favour.

Mr. Rabin told the Maariv daily that he would not dismantle settlements during the 1994-1999 interim period of Palestinian self-rule, even though a majority of ministers in his cabinet favours doing so.

"Leaving (these) settlements in place puts a heavy burden on the army... but along with that, I was and am sure that during the interim arrangement it is not necessary to uproot settlements," Mr. Rabin told Maariv.

"I didn't say we will not dismantle settlements in the final status arrangements. In

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Jordan 'does not condone terrorist activity'

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has denied that it condoned Hamas operations and pledged to curb illegal activities on its territory by any extremist group.

"Jordan categorically rejects any hints that lead to blaming any parties in the Kingdom for certain terrorist acts," Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat called Wednesday on Jordan to silence officials of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in Amman who have often attacked the Palestinian self-rule authority he heads.

He charged that Hamas was giving orders and distributing finance from Amman.

Mr. Kabariti said: "Jordan refused to take the responsibility for any terrorist activities not related to any certified Jordanian group."

"And it will not allow any political group to work without prior official licence, in line with the construction and pertinent laws, provided that it renounced violence."

He noted that "any party breaching those terms would render it legally accountable before the law."

Hamas has no official representation in Amman but two of its senior officials live here, spokesmen Ibrahim Ghoshe and Mohammad Nazzari who says he represents the movement in Jordan.

Interior Minister Salameh Hammad summoned Mr. Ghoshe, a Jordanian citizen, on Wednesday to warn him against issuing statements which could "harm another state," international agencies reported.

The Muslim Brotherhood criticised the move.

"This is an irresponsible act tantamount to hijack operations," it said in a statement.

"The Brotherhood also condemned as 'oppressive' a crackdown on militants by Mr. Arafat's self-rule authority since Sunday's bombings."

Hamas, meanwhile objected to Jordan's rebuking its officials in Amman and said it hoped the Kingdom would refrain from such acts in future.

In a statement issued in Jerusalem, Hamas said:

"We in Hamas hope that this unfortunate incident will not be repeated in the future particularly since the movement represents the hope of the nation and is in the forefront in defending it against the fierce Zionist aggression."

University feud seen on way to end after prime minister's intervention

By Rana Hussein

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A crisis that developed between two factions and led to clashes at the University of Jordan on April 5 appears to be on its way to be settled after Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker intervened in the dispute, community leaders said Friday.

They said that during separate meetings on Wednesday with representatives of the Circassian and Chechen communities and Parliament members from Balqa Governorate, Sharif Zeid pledged to pursue all the measures to ensure law and order and prevent any repetition of the violent incidents which occurred in the university campus.

The prime minister urged students to exercise restraint and settle the differences sparked by the events.

"National unity and the rule of law remain among the major priorities of the government at a time when

efforts are being exerted towards constructing a modern state," Sharif Zeid was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

"The government will not tolerate any attempt to tamper with the country's security and stability under any circumstances," the prime minister added.

The April 5 clashes at the university were started by a fight between two students and developed into a larger brawl involving more than 100 students of Circassian and Salt origin. Dozens of students were injured.

As community leaders were attempting to settle the crisis, clashes erupted again on Wednesday when nearly 10 people described as non-students by witnesses entered the campus and started a fight which left three students injured.

Ahmad Lawzi, speaker of the Upper House of Parliament, said after Wednesday meetings that the prime minister emphasised that leg-

al action would be taken against the instigators or perpetrators of the violence.

Samir Qardan, president of the Circassian Society, said it was important to ensure national unity and the country's reputation and for students to return to their classes safely.

At the same time, he added, "we hope that the incidents will not reoccur."

"We will not accept the idea of being attacked, but since the day of the first incident, we have controlled the situation and calmed our youth who were involved in the incident," Mr. Qardan said Friday.

According to Mr. Qardan, a meeting will be held soon to meet with leaders of Salt community to settle the issue.

"In a recent meeting with them we both agreed that there is no difference between Saltis and Circassians," he said.

A Salt community leader said families in Salt were expecting quick action from

the government.

"A quick solution is needed because we cannot control the actions of our youth and the Circassian youth as well and their desire to take revenge from each other," he told the Jordan Times on condition of anonymity.

According to the man, a meeting will be held soon between the two parties but that people in Salt have some requests "in order for this problem to be solved peacefully."

He said that Salt families were demanding that the problem be solved in a traditional tribal manner.

This will be the first step towards settling the problem, he said.

"No one can guarantee the safety of Salt and Circassian students, and their lives will always represent a threat to each other unless there was a comprehensive and final solution to restore the problem," said the community leader.

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U.N. report casts doubt on Iraq statements

UNITED NATIONS (USIA) — The U.N. Special Commission overseeing the destruction of Iraqi weapons (UNSCOM) says that its long-term monitoring and verification system is in place, but it cannot yet assure the Security Council that Baghdad is no longer a threat to the international community, U.N. officials and diplomats say.

It will be some time, they note, before all of Iraq's facilities, equipment and imports are being watched closely enough to make such assurances.

UNSCOM Chairman Ambassador Rolf Ekeus submitted a written report to the council April 10 and then met with council members on April 12 and 13, responding to questions about how and why UNSCOM can be confident that Iraq's future capabilities in each of the banned areas — chemical, biological, nuclear, and ballistic weapons — can be watched without lapses by the United Nations.

U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright said April 12, following a meeting with Mr. Ekeus, that the United States has "the highest confidence" in UNSCOM's work.

She pointed out, however, that the problem is with Iraq's lack of compliance and not the Special Commission.

"Ambassador Ekeus noted that the monitoring regime cannot be substantively effective because Iraq has not cooperated yet in major areas... The most disturbing fact is that Iraq may well have produced biological weapons which remains unaccounted for," she said.

UNSCOM's problem with the long-term monitoring, Ms. Albright said, is that "it does not have some of the baseline material (from Iraq) to make it effective."

Speaking with reporters after one private meeting with the council, Mr. Ekeus said that "we have no reservations on the mechanism that is in place and humming along in a very satisfactory way. Our problem is, of course... that we have some items in the biological area which are not accounted for and we are not able to control these capabilities. Therefore, in a substantive sense, there are still some shortcomings."

The formal, written report to the council said that Baghdad did not provide complete information on its biological weapons programmes or account for all the items related to those programmes. UNSCOM said Iraq imported "very large quantities of complex growth media" used to grow bacteria for germ warfare, and has failed to provide a satisfactory accounting of the purposes and use of the growth media.

"With Iraq's failure to account for the use of these items and materials for legitimate purposes, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that there is a high risk that they had been purchased and used for... acquisition of biological warfare agents," the UNSCOM report said.

The report also said that

the chemical weapons monitoring system is now operational, but that new information provided by Baghdad in March is being reviewed in light of Iraq's claim that significantly reduced quantities of chemical warfare agents were produced.

"Iraq now declares that it produced 290 tonnes of chemical weapons agents less than previously stated," the report said.

Mr. Ekeus said that "before we had a reasonable material balance of precursors compared with finally produced chemical agents for warfare purposes. Now when they lowered the numbers, we will have questions about what happened on the other side. That creates a very complex situation."

He said the United Nations is now contacting chemical weapons experts around the world "so we can get a broad international scientific group coming in a few weeks' time to work over all this data to get an answer" to what the changes mean.

Although Iraq claims that all of its chemical weapons equipment was destroyed during the Gulf war, UNSCOM said in its report to the council that it has been unable to verify that claim independently and "cannot definitively account for all the equipment of concern."

UNSCOM said that its experts visited 57 chemical sites; 17 universities, colleges and research institutions (to assess their research potential); and five military storage depots (because of their potential to store chemical weapons). UNSCOM said it expects that the number of chemical sites monitored will increase with the development of Iraq's chemical industry.

Asked about reports that Iraq is continuing research in nuclear weapons, Mr. Ekeus said that there is "enough concern to continue to explore this issue and that, fundamentally, is up to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) to explain."

In the meantime UNSCOM and the IAEA, which is overseeing Iraq's nuclear capabilities, have plans to set up a special export/import mechanism to monitor future sales or supplies for Iraq's nuclear needs that could be diverted to a nuclear weapons programme once the sanctions against Iraq have been lifted, according to the UNSCOM report.

The whole scheme rests on a system of notifications made by Iraq and the governments of exporters of the so-called "dual purpose" items to Iraq. It would become operational as soon as it is approved by the Security Council and will begin handling the nuclear items while the U.N. Sanctions Committee supervises the remainder of Iraq's imports.

The planning began 18 months ago with a series of conferences attended by international experts, U.N. officials and experts from those governments that have had wide experience in exporting goods to Iraq prior to the imposition of sanctions.



EQUESTRIAN SPORTS: Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein on Friday hands over prizes to winners of equestrian competitions which were held at the Hussein Youth City's equestrian field. The festival included a 1,200-metre and 1,600-metre horse racing competitions in addition to jumping exercises. The festival was organised by the Royal Jordanian Society for Arab Horses in cooperation with the Equestrian Federation.

U.S. warns Turkey EU deal could be lost

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has told Turkey that its bid to join the European customs union would probably be defeated if the vote took place now because of opposition to Ankara's incursion into Iran, a senior U.S. official said on Thursday.

The official also acknowledged inherent difficulties in a U.S. policy which relies on Turkey's efforts to end cross-border rebel attacks by encouraging rival Iraqi Kurdish factions to settle their differences.

He briefed reporters on condition of anonymity after a trip to Turkey by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke.

Their talks in Ankara underscored the administration's heightened focus on Turkey as Europe's post-cold war security frontline and helped prepare the ground for a visit to Washington next week by Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller.

The United States, while

less publicly critical than other North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) allies, has made clear that Ankara's decision to send 35,000 troops into Iraq on March 20 to wipe out Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) bases has damaged Turkey's standing in the international community and must be ended soon.

This point was reinforced by Mr. Talbott and Mr. Holbrooke, who stressed to Ms. Ciller the importance of the next six months as the runup to a vote by the European Parliament on Turkey's long-sought bid to join the European Union (EU) customs union, a prelude to full EU membership.

But the officials came away with no commitment as to a specific target date for Turkey to withdraw its troops from Iraq, something U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has said should be announced before Ms. Ciller's U.S. visit.

Turkish officials in Ankara repeated assurances that the operation would be over in a few weeks, but that "duration is something we're not 100 per cent clear on," the official said.

He said Mr. Talbott and Mr. Holbrooke told Ms. Ciller "the most important diplomatic objective is to have the European Parliament approve the customs union that was approved by EU nations" in March.

"It is our judgement based on our soundings in Europe that if the European Parliament were to vote today, that customs union would be defeated," said the official, who added that Ms. Ciller did not dispute that statement.

The official also said Mr. Talbott and Mr. Holbrooke stressed the need for Turkey to move forward with a democratisation programme which has been held up in parliament.

There have been civilian casualties due to Turkey's incursion, but these are inevitable in such operations and "we have no reports of any major disasters," the official said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Egypt to upgrade relations with South Korea

SEOUL (AP) — Egypt has agreed to establish full diplomatic relations with South Korea soon, a senior South Korean foreign ministry official said Thursday. The official, requesting anonymity, said that South Korea was informed of the Egyptian decision through diplomatic channels this week. Arrangements were being made to sign a protocol upgrading the two countries' consular relations to the full ambassadorial-level ties, he said. Egypt and South Korea have maintained consular relations since 1961. Egypt, which has been friendly with Seoul's rival, communist North Korea, so far has been reluctant to open formal ties with South Korea. According to Seoul officials, Egypt has been pro-North Korea, apparently because it feels indebted to the North for dispatching pilots to fly Egyptian MiG fighter jets in the 1973 war against Israel. President Hosni Mubarak was the Egyptian air force chief of staff at that time, they said. But Mr. Mubarak now appears to be changing his pro-Pyongyang attitude after North Korean President Kim Il Sung died last July, the officials said.

Parents plead for help to find kidnapped son

BEIRUT (AFP) — The parents of a Lebanese boy kidnapped 18 months ago appealed Wednesday to the authorities step up the search for their missing child. The parents of Amid Eid last had news of their son in October 1993 four months after he was kidnapped in broad daylight outside their home in Bachamoun, a Druze district of Beirut on July 26 that year. Four hours after his kidnap a message arrived by taxi demanding a \$1 million ransom for their 10-year-old son. After several threatening phone calls, Nehme Eid managed to raise \$125,000 by mortgaging his homeland selling some land. But the kidnappers turned down the offer, and there has been no news of Amid since. The desperate parents have already taken their case to Lebanese leaders winning an audience with President Elias Hrawi and Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, but to no avail. "We don't understand how those who succeeded in disarming the militias and ended 15 years of war cannot find the kidnappers of a child," Mr. Eid said.

Spanish businessmen visit Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A Spanish delegation of businessmen and doctors arrived Thursday in Baghdad as guests of the ministry of industry and mineral resources, the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported. The report said the group included 28 representatives from 20 Spanish companies and a medical team of eye and bone specialists. INA did not say how long they would be staying in Iraq. A number of Arab and Western delegations have visited Iraq in recent months to discuss business contracts that would take effect when a four-year-old international embargo, imposed on Iraq after the Gulf war, is lifted.

Clinton: Somalia 'most depressing' moment

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton said on Thursday that the most depressing moment of his presidency was when a dozen American troops died in fighting in Somalia on Oct. 4, 1993. "It was the most personally depressing moment to me," he said in a CNN interview. The troops were killed in fighting in Mogadishu with guerrillas loyal to a Somali warlord, U.N. peacekeepers, including American forces, ultimately gave up efforts to capture the warlord, Mohammad Farah Aided. Mr. Clinton said the United States learned a lesson from the Somalia experience which it put to use in more successful missions in Rwanda and Haiti. He said one of the most exhilarating moments of his presidency was when his economic plan of cutting deficit spending and raising taxes on the wealthy was passed by one vote in the Senate in 1993.

Philippines, Kuwait clinch air pact

MANILA (AP) — The Philippines and Kuwait have signed an air agreement that would increase air flights between the two countries, the Philippine transportation and communications secretary said Friday. Secretary Jesus Garcia, who just returned from a trip to Kuwait, said that under the pact Kuwait Airways will begin increasing the number of its flights to the country despite the few number of passengers "to develop the market." Mr. Garcia did not say when the increased flights will begin nor the frequency of the trips. He said Philippine Airlines may "similarly increase the frequencies of its flights to Kuwait on an arrangement that is both reciprocal and mutually profitable." He also said a Kuwaiti delegation is expected to arrive next week to look for possible investment opportunities in the country.

Pakistani beheaded for drug smuggling

RIYADH (AP) — A Pakistani was beheaded Friday after an Islamic court convicted him of drug smuggling, the Interior Ministry announced. The execution of Rustom Mohammad Hassan Kol was the eighth announced in 48 hours. The others beheaded were three Pakistanis and four Nigerians. So far this year, more than 60 people have been beheaded in Saudi Arabia, mostly Asians and Africans convicted of drug smuggling.

Former Greek deputy police chief jailed

ATHENS (AP) — An Athens prosecutor Friday jailed the former deputy chief of the Greek police on felony charges of fraud and weapons dealing. Michalis Nistakakis, who was retired in late 1993, was jailed pending trial after 12 hours of questioning by a prosecutor and investigating magistrate. Mr. Nistakakis was acquitted by a court earlier this month of trafficking in stolen antiquities.

Libya defiant after 3 years of sanctions

NICOSIA (AFP) — U.N. sanctions on Libya enter their fourth year on Saturday with Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi still laughing in the face of Western demands and now vowing to bust the air embargo.

Foreign experts and diplomats based in Tripoli said Libya can hold out against the West as long as U.S. oil exports which bring in \$9 billion a year remain unaffected by the sanctions.

Not only has Libya refused to hand over two suspects wanted for the Lockerbie bombing in December 1988, but last month Colonel Qadhafi pledged to fly Libyan pilgrims to Mecca for the annual pilgrimage.

A U.N. ban on international air travel was slapped on Tripoli on April 15, 1992 to force Libya to hand over to either Britain or the United States the two suspects accused of bombing of a U.S. plane which blew up over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people.

The air embargo, which



Muammar Qadhafi

its oil industry running for two years, unless a major accident happens, in a refinery for example," a Western oil firm official operating in the Eastern Desert said.

But Tripoli's drive to build up its reserves of spare parts requires large sums, which affects the budget, he added.

Inflation has been steadily rising, shown by the fall of Libyan dinar on the black market where it is now worth 30 cents, compared with \$3 at the official rate, said Tripoli residents.

Despite a threat earlier this year by the United States to impose a full oil embargo, Tripoli remains confident that countries with stakes in Libyan oil such as Italy, Germany and Belgium will oppose any such plans, the diplomat said.

So Libya has pressed ahead with plans to break the air embargo.

Calls have been issued via the official media to volunteer for the Mecca flights and Friday prayers have been dominated by the issue, residents said.

But there are doubts about how serious Tripoli is, even though the official agency JANA said more than 1,000 people have already volunteered.

As one diplomat put it, Col. Qadhafi "is anything but predictable."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 Dog City
14:30 Harry and Henderson
15:00 Witness to Survival
15:30 Road to Avonlea
16:30 Taran
17:00 Le Pain Noir
19:00 News in French
19:15 Fa Uti Pas Rivera
19:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
20:00 Life in the Friczer
20:30 The Nanny
21:00 Dive the World
21:15 Cape Rebel
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film: "Across the Red Night"
00:59 Tananariva

PRAYER TIMES

05:42 Fajr
07:02 (Sunrise) Duha
13:36 Dhuhur
17:12 'Asr
20:08 Maghrib
21:29 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swifelh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627400

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 623666

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 625843.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775251.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Armenian International Church Tel. 625226.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 604195

The Lutheran Church Tel. 654932

The Church of Nazareth Tel. 625491.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Moderate and sunny weather conditions will prevail with temperatures rising further. Winds will be northwesterly moderate and becoming southeasterly moderate in the afternoon. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 5/21

Aqaba 12/29

Deserts 3/25

Jordan Valley 12/28

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 17, Aqaba 26 Humidity readings: Amman 42 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Ghazi Abdullah 842286

Dr. Youssef Sammour 663254

Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 682935

Dr. Khalid M'addi 743500

Fina pharmacy 661912

Rendous pharmacy 776536

Al Asena pharmacy 637055

Natrouk pharmacy 626762

Al Salam pharmacy 626730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shamsam pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847032

ZARQA:

Dr. Ziyad J'aitom (-)

Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Civil Defence Department 661111

Rescue 630341

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

University Hospital 845845

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467

Amman Municipality 787111

Complaints (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 630321

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information

08:53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08:53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussain Medical Centre 81381/332

Khalidi Maternity, J. Ann 6442816

Akileh Maternity, J. Ann 6442412

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 6641714

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Musheir Hospital 6672279

The Islamic, Abdali 66612737

Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3

AB-Basir, J. Ashrafieh 77511/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)83323

Zarqa National Hospital

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)902660

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)98949

DRIB:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)27275

Ibn Al Nafiz Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)214111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:45 Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)

10:15 Aqaba (RJ)

10:40 New Delhi (RJ)

10:55 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)

11:15 Beirut (RJ)

11:25 Colombo (RJ)

14:35 Vienna (add) (RJ)

16:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

17:50 Cairo (RJ)

19:30 London, Berlin (RJ)

22:50 Madrid (RJ)

02:00 Brussels, Damascus (RJ)

04:15 London, Aqaba (RJ)

Home News

Arab Thought Forum to meet in Doha

AMMAN (Petra) — The General Assembly of the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) will hold its ninth annual meeting in Doha, Qatar on Wednesday.

The announcement was made Friday by ATF Secretary-General Ali Omleil who noted that the meeting assumes great significance in view of the large number of ATF members expected to participate.

He said the delegates represent various disciplines and the meeting comes at a time when disarray in Arab and Islamic ranks prevails, added Mr. Omleil.

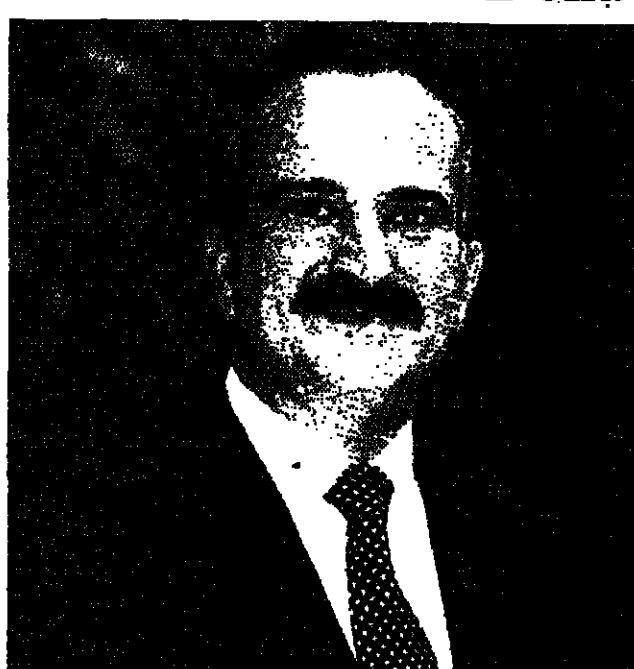
He said that international and regional events had prevented the convening of the ATF's general assembly for the past four years.

Referring to the topics on the meeting's agenda Dr. Omleil said that discussions during the two-day event would cover plans for 1995 and beyond, the ATF's financial report and general secretary's report on activities in the past year as well as the election of a new ATF board of trustees.

The meeting will include a seminar on the consequences of the regional events in the past four years, focusing on the peace process, added Dr. Omleil.

The general assembly, he added, is expected to chart plans for opening Arab dialogues with Austria, Turkey, Iran and South Africa.

Dr. Omleil said the general secretary's report would call on the Arab states to end their differences and reach a minimum level of solidarity in the face of common regional and international developments and challenges.



Dr. Ali Omleil, Secretary-General of the Arab Thought Forum, is seen in a portrait. He is a man with a mustache, wearing a suit and tie, looking directly at the camera.

U.N. approves 20,000 Jordanian claims for '90-91 Gulf crisis losses

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Nearly 20,000 Jordanian claims for compensation for losses suffered in the 1990-91 Gulf crisis have been approved, but it is not known when the applicants would receive payment, according to an official in charge of coordinating the claims.

Yahya Otobi, secretary-general of an organization handling Jordanian claims filed with a Geneva-based United Nations committee, said that the U.N. committee approved 19,762 claims in category A — those forced to flee Kuwait after Iraq invaded the emirate — and 59 in category B — those who suffered a death in the family or sustained personal injuries as a result of the Iraqi invasion.

Total Jordanian claims in the various categories, including those who lost property and companies which suffered direct and indirect losses from the invasion, are around 110,000.

Nearly 70,000 of these claims are in category A, about 800 in category B and the rest in C, D and E — involving losses of personal property and corporate losses.

Two hundred and forty-one Jordanian applications in category B — which is given priority — were approved last year, and the U.N. committee paid \$982,750 to the successful claimants.

"The committee approved 19,762 category A claims and 59 category B claims in a meeting held in March," Mr. Otobi told the Jordan Times. "But we don't know when they will be paid since payment is linked to liquidity of the U.N. committee," he added.

The claims are worth about \$50 million, including \$220,000 in category B.

The 59 successful claims were among 105 considered by the committee, he said. Twenty-nine claims were rejected, 11 were suspended pending more information to be provided by the applicants, five were found to be duplicated claims and one claim was moved to category C, Mr. Otobi said.

Between 350 and 400 Jordanian claims in category B remain unaddressed.

The governing council of the U.N. Compensation Commission said in March it had approved compensation awards to more than 162,800 claimants, including 160,000 claims in category A.

Another 800 were approved in category B raising to more than 4,000 the number of accepted claims in this group.

With the new approvals, the total number of claims approved by the governing council of the U.N. compensation commission has reached more than 220,000 with an estimated value of \$870 million, the panel said.

The committee, which began work in late 1992 after being set up under a resolution adopted by the U.N. Security Council, received "less than \$50 million" in funds. It paid out \$5.5 million in 670 claims — including the 241 Jordanian claims — in mid-1994. It has frozen all further payments — regardless of approval of claims — until it receives more funds, a senior commission official said in January.

"We do not know when the approved claimants could receive the payments since funds are not yet available," said Michael Rabin, assistant secretary-general of the commission.

The commission's governing council, which is responsible for actual approval of claims as recommended by the commission, said in a March 22 statement that it was concerned over the "current financial situation of the compensation fund, in light of the lack of sufficient funds available for the payment of accumulated compensation awards."

It called for "prompt action in order to maintain the dynamics of the operation." Funds for the compensation fund are supposed to come from the diversion of 30 per cent of all Iraqi oil exports as called for in U.N. Security Council Resolution 778 of October 1992. But as long as Iraqi oil sales remain frozen under international sanctions imposed after the invasion of Kuwait, the fund has little to look forward to in revenues from this direction.

The "less than \$50 million" fund received so far came from a special U.N. account to which several countries transferred frozen Iraqi oil assets as resolution 778 called for.

Although the account received several hundred million dollars, the fund received only a part of it since the amount had to be distributed among five U.N. agencies dealing with separate areas related to the enforcement of the Security Council.

Hopes are high that the commission would receive funds to settle the outstanding approved claims with indications that Iraq might offer a one-time limited oil sale to raise funds to meet its urgent humanitarian needs. If the deal goes through, then 30 per cent of the proceeds will be aside for war reparations to be channelled through the U.N. commission.

The Omani official and the accompanying delegation were received at the airport upon arrival by Ministry of Interior Acting Secretary General Faisal Khasawneh, Amman Governor Tal'at Al Nawaiseh and other senior officials.

Mr. Boursa'idi said Jordan's democratisation experience was the best in the region "and we will try to benefit from it as much as we can."

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Royal commission issues new regulations to ensure equal educational opportunity

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Commission for Reform and Modernisation issued new set of regulations for the Royal Endowment (makrama) to ensure equal educational opportunity to students in the badia and remote areas.

The regulations, which will be effective next scholastic year according to a statement issued on Friday, set the basic standards and conditions upon which tawjihi students can obtain the royal endowments for university education.

The main schools to benefit from the Royal Endowment are the badia schools in the south, the centre and the north of the Kingdom which suffer from considerable lack of teachers and undergo difficult economic and social circumstances.

The second category includes the "less fortunate schools" which, by the committee's definition, are the schools which are remote from the centre of governorates, districts and

sub-districts, do not meet the minimum standards of education and lack basic educational facilities and pedagogic means.

A special committee comprising representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Jordanian Armed Forces, badia and desert police is in charge of naming and classifying these schools.

According to the commission's report, students who wish to benefit from the Royal Endowment should be graduates of badia schools or less fortunate schools named by the committee. They should also be tawjihi graduates in the same year they apply to study at the university. Their grades should not be lower than 65 per cent for those who wish to study in humanities colleges and 80 per cent for those who wish to pursue a scientific career in the engineering, pharmacy or medicine faculties.

The applicants should also be enrolled for at least

their last three years in the badia schools or the less fortunate schools. They should present a certificate signed and endorsed by the school's administration.

Applicants should also present a certificate of good conduct from the concerned authorities.

Applicants, who have already been accepted in one of the government-run universities through competition or other endowments, should not apply for the Royal Endowment.

Applicants should also submit an application to the unified coordination office.

The commission's report said that the Royal Endowment seats should be geographically distributed in line with the number of residents in that area and the number of student applicants for the Royal Endowment.

A special committee for the Royal Endowment will be in charge of receiving applications and distributing them to the respective universities. This commit-

tee consists of representatives of the Royal Court, Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, the Military Education and Culture Department of the Jordanian Armed Forces, badia and desert police.

The designated committee will be in charge of allocating the appropriate seats in the different faculties to applicants in accordance with their grades.

The regulations also allow sons and daughters of government employees who have been transferred into the badia regions or in the less fortunate areas to benefit from the Royal Endowment regardless of the time period as stipulated in the above-mentioned set of standards.

The new regulations also allotted one seat for every excellent student in each different governorate and in every different specialisation: industrial, commercial, nursing, hotel management and agricultural. This seat is allotted to

excelling students in the areas and schools that fall under the Royal Endowment definition.

According to the report of the Royal commission that was submitted to its president, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, these regulations mainly aim at reformulating and restructuring the basic standards set for obtaining the Royal Endowment to ensure equality among all badia students and those studying in the less fortunate schools.

These regulations, the report said, will also ensure that the Royal Endowment will be awarded to those who really deserve it in accordance with the directives and intention of His Majesty King Hussein when he first issued the Royal Decree regarding it.

This measure, the report said, aims at upgrading the educational level in these areas, in the badia and remote schools, and ensuring equality in all layers of society all over the Kingdom.

Japanese delegation ends Jordan visit after talks with Regent on Japan's role in region

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A Japanese parliamentary delegation left Jordan for Israel early Friday after talks with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on the Middle East peace process and Jordan's views on Japan's role in the region, Japanese Ambassador Yuji Ikeda said.

The delegation, which included representatives of the three parties in the ruling coalition in Tokyo on a mission to assess pros and cons of Japan participating in the U.N. observer force on the Golan, was received by the Regent in "Aqaba."

The Japanese delegation sought the views of His Royal Highness on prospects for peace in the Middle East and the role Japan could play in the region," Ambassador Ikeda told the Jordan Times.

The 22-member delegation included Japanese politicians and parliament members from the Liberal Democratic

Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Shinseto party — the three members of the ruling coalition.

The main purpose of the delegation's visit to the Middle East is to appraise whether Japan could contribute troops to the U.N. disengagement observer force (UNDOF) on the Golan after its withdrawal.

Canada said it was withdrawing a 50-member unit of transport specialists from the 1,000-strong force, deployed since 1974.

The Tokyo government is expected to draw largely from the findings and recommendations of the delegation before deciding on whether to participate in the U.N. force.

The delegation visited Damascus as well as the Golan Heights for what was described as close familiarisation with the situation in the area.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the Regent and the Japanese politicians reviewed Jordan's efforts

aimed at a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

Petra quoted the head of the delegation as paying tribute to Jordan's efforts for peace and the Kingdom's signing of a peace treaty with Israel in October 1994.

The Regent's discussions with the delegation also covered Jordanian-Japanese cooperation and Tokyo's growing interest in the Middle East, particularly in issues related to Arab-Israeli peace.

The Regent and the delegation also discussed Japanese economic assistance to the region's economic development as a contribution to efforts to consolidate peace, Petra said.

Also reviewed were issues related to the Amman economic summit to be held in October and Japan's role in the conference, which is expected to be the main forum for launching many regional and national economic development projects.

Also expected to have

been covered during the discussions were preparations to hold a Jordan Week in Japan in the last week of May.

Crown Prince Hassan will lead the Jordanian delegation to the event, which is described as the best opportunity yet for the Kingdom to come under high media focus in Japan and elsewhere.

Petra reported that the Japanese delegation voiced appreciation of Jordan's expressions of solidarity with Japan, particularly the aid that the Kingdom sent to Japan following an earthquake in Kobe in January.

Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Khabazi also met with the Japanese delegation. Mr. Khabazi briefed the members of the delegation on Jordan's stand on various issues, especially the peace process, and Jordan's efforts to support it, Petra said.

The foreign minister also reviewed Jordanian-Japanese relations and Japan's economic support for

Jordan, which, he said, seeks to have an active Japanese role in supporting the peace process.

The head of the delegation said Japan will play a more active role in that regard, through supporting projects and initiatives that would enhance political and economic stability in the region, the agency said.

Ambassador Ikeda meanwhile noted that Japan had not taken a final decision whether to send troops to UNDOF and that the delegation's report was the main element that would determine the decision.

Mr. Ikeda said it was unlikely that Japan would also send military observers to the Golan as part of a Syrian-Israeli peace agreement. Reports have said that the U.S. might deploy its troops in a demilitarised zone on the Golan depending on the outcome of ongoing peace negotiations between Israel and Syria.

JD 20 forgery racket quashed — officials

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An attempt at circulating forged Jordanian banknotes appears to have been thwarted completely after several arrests were made in Jordan and in the Gaza Strip, according to officials.

They said the volume of the forgeries of JD 20 bills was limited, and the case was not immediately after the first notes appeared in the local scene early this year.

Most of the key suspects in the case are in detention awaiting trial. The officials could not immediately provide information on how many people were to be tried and when the trials

could start. The police department said it had no immediate information on the status of the case.

At least three people were arrested in Jordan shortly after the authorities cautioned the public against the forgeries.

Reports in the Palestinian press said at least two people were held in the Gaza Strip after they tried to circulate the forged currency in the Palestinian autonomous areas. It was not known whether the suspects were sent to Jordan for trial.

However, residents of the West Bank and Gaza say, forgeries appear off and on in the territories, but in the absence of a

strict law-enforcement agency there most cases are not reported.

In 1989, a case was reported when forged JD 20 dinar bills were spotted by a bank in Europe. The forgeries were traced to Israel. Again, little was heard of the affair except a warning in the local press against the counterfeit.

The forged JD 20 dinar bills were relatively easy to detect, according to details released by the authorities at that time. The forgeries were in a different texture of paper and were slightly bigger in size, and these in themselves were the best indicators in addition to bad printing and blurred watermarks that were easily spotted.

Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Nabulsi asserted that Jordanian currency was very difficult to forge.

"We print our currency in some of the best printing presses in the world," he said recently. "It may cost a little more," but the end product has special safeguards against forgeries, he said.

On the recent appearance of forged JD 20 notes, he said: "There is no more coming. I have a feeling that those (behind the forgery) have been fully deterred by the immediate action by the Central Bank and the security department."

"I think they have been blocked completely," he

said without elaboration. Some reports had suggested that Israeli were behind the forgery and that Israeli tourists were freely circulating the counterfeit in Jordan.

Dr. Nabulsi rejected the reports and said: "We don't have anything like that."

There has only been one substantiated report that an Israeli visitor to Jordan tried to pass, wittingly or unwittingly, a forged JD 20-dinar note at one of the crossings as he was entering the Kingdom. The forgery was immediately detected and the man was arrested and questioned. Nothing more was heard about the case.

Weekend road accidents kill 3 people — CDD

AMMAN (Petra) — Three people were killed and 12 others were injured in three road accidents took place in various parts of the Kingdom on Thursday and Friday, according to the Civil Defence Department (CDD) sources.

On Friday morning six people were injured when their bus hit an electric pole in the north Marka area.

The casualties were rushed to Al Bashir Hospital and were listed in fair condition, hospital sources said.

On Thursday two people

were killed and five others injured in a road accident involving a small tourist vehicle and a bus near the Hofa Wassehah crossroad in Irbid Governorate.

The accident claimed the lives of both Ali and Mohammad Omari and left five others injured, including two people from the Omari family.

The injured were taken to Prince Rashid and Princess Basma hospitals. They are suffering from fractures and wounds.

PNA youth minister ends visit after signing cooperation protocol

AMMAN (J.T.) — Palestine National Authority (PNA) Minister of Youth and Sports Azmi Shueibi Friday ended a visit to Jordan during which he signed a protocol on Palestinian-Jordanian cooperation in youth and sports affairs with Minister of Youth Awad Kheifat.

The protocol, which was signed Thursday evening, calls for coordination and cooperation between the two sides in matters related to youth and sports activities and paves the way for the

Palestinians to benefit from related Jordanian expertise.

The two sides pledged to exchange visits by youth and sports delegations and to encourage joint programmes by scouts and youth clubs in organising camps and sports activities.

The fourth clause in the protocol stated that the Jordanian Ministry of Youth would continue to provide expertise to help the Palestinians carry out infrastructure work in sports and youth centres and in training cadres

and coaches.

The protocol provides for the two sides to coordinate their stands at the Arab, regional and international conferences and for the creation of a joint committee to follow up the implementation of the protocol.

Dr. Kheifat and Dr. Shueibi delivered short addresses at the signing ceremony emphasising the importance of the protocol as one more aspect in further corroborating Palestinian-Jordanian relations.

Jordan signs world pact to fight desertification

NEW YORK (Petra) — Acting for the Jordanian government the Kingdom's Ambassador to the United Nations, Adnan Abu Odeh, Friday signed the International Treaty on Combating Desertification during a special ceremony held at the United Nations headquarters.

The treaty which was reached by world delegations

at the World Summit on Development and Environment held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, aims at enlisting international efforts to fight off desertification especially in Africa and other areas bordering desert lands.

Jordan is among the countries which continually face drought and the threat of desertification.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

CONCERT

★ Flute and piano recital by Duo Celestine — Cattaniani (programme includes pieces by Debussy, Mendelssohn, and others) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

LECTURE

★ Lecture (in Arabic) entitled "Education Under Siege" by Dr. Mohammad Ali Taha at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:30 p.m.

SPRING BAZAAR

★ Spring bazaar (organised by the United Nations Women's Guild) including handicrafts, ceramics, pot-pouri, T-shirts, home-made goods, clothing and others at the Royal Cultural Centre (10:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m.)

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of paintings by Samer Oussama at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of paintings by 13 leading Jordanian artists at the Italian Language Centre (Tel. 699348).

★ Exhibition of paintings by Mohammad Mahruq Din Adhim at Balqa Art Gallery, Fuhais.

★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Hadia Mu'ashsher at Alia Art Gallery.

★ Exhibition of art by Ahmad Na'wash at Ab'ad Art Gallery.

★ A collection of photos of Middle East doors by Julia Reinholdt at the Gallery, off the main lobby, Inter-Continental Hotel.

★ Exhibition of art by Moroccan artist Farid Belkhabla at Darat Al Funnun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

★ Exhibition of art by Yassin Atiyeh and Yassin Al Muhammadawi at Baladna Art Gallery.

★ Exhibition of copper sculptures by Iraqi artist Mohammad Hussein Judi at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.

★ Exhibition of graphic works by Rafiq Lahham at Darat Al Funnun. Also displaying works by contemporary Arab artists.

★ Exhibition of art by Leo Rialp at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).

Japan mounts huge clampdown on sect on 'disaster' eve

TOKYO (R) — Japan mounted an unprecedented crackdown Friday on the doomsday cult linked to nerve gas attacks last month after its leader warned that an even more terrible disaster was about to strike Tokyo.

In Japan's largest peace-time security operation, about 100,000 police officers — more than a third of the nation's force — descended on dozens of buildings owned by the cult and imposed heavy security checks across the capital.

Police acted on the eve of what the leader Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth Sect) prophesied would be a day of catastrophe for Tokyo more chilling than the Kobe earthquake in January which killed more than 5,500 people.

In another mark of the nervousness gripping the country, executives announced they would close two major shopping centres Saturday in response to the apocalyptic prediction from Aum guru Shoko Asahara.

U.S. military forces radio urged Americans in Japan to take care when going out over the weekend.

Asahara forecast an event would take place Saturday, possibly an earthquake, "that will make the Kobe earthquake seem as minor as a fly landing on one's cheek."

The sect claims Asahara, who has also said the world will end in 1997, predicted the devastating Kobe earthquake.

Asahara remained in hiding, too ill, his spokesman said, to appear in public to answer charges against a cult subjected to almost daily police raids following the March 20 sarin nerve gas attacks on the Tokyo subway system.

A police spokesman said in a television interview that authorities were preparing an arrest warrant for Asahara. He did not specify the charges.

Police say they have arrested a total of 107 sect

members since the subway attack on charges including abduction, illegal confinement and traffic offences.

But they have not openly linked the group to the attack, which killed 11 people and made more than 5,000 ill. Aum has denied any link with the attack.

"With all these arrests, it feels like the second coming of a police state," said Aum spokesman Fumihiko Joju.

Mr. Joju said Asahara's prophecy of a new disaster was based on his astrology studies and that Aum posed no safety threat.

"Please rest assured that Aum Shinri Kyo will not be taking any action," Mr. Joju said in a television interview.

In Friday's raids, there were tense scuffles between Aum believers and riot police, who dragged cult children kicking and screaming from their parents.

At the sprawling Aum compound at the foot of Mt. Fuji, west of Tokyo, where earlier police raids turned up

the ingredients of sarin, 53 children aged between three and 14 were taken away in vans to the custody of a nearby nursery.

Many of the children wore the electronic headgear the cult is believed to use to brainwash followers. NHK public television said many of the children were malnourished.

Believers, slim and pale from the fasting their religion demands, frantically tried to bar police from buildings and screamed of religious suppression to watching news crews.

At the same time, police put Tokyo under blanket security until Sunday, checking cars, questioning occupants and checking still further the capital's notoriously busy traffic.

Guards stood at some major subway stations while loudspeakers on trains warned passengers not to touch any suspicious package left on trains or at stations.



An unidentified member of Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth) is escorted out of the sect's Tokyo headquarters building before police begin searching. Japanese police launched a massive simultaneous search of all 130 buildings belonging to the sect, which is linked to the March 20 nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway (AFT photo)

Actor-singer Burl Ives dies at 85

ANACROTOS, Washington (AP) — Burl Ives, who made classic recordings of folk songs like The Blue Tail Fly and defined the role of old daddy in the movie Cat On A Hot Tin Roof, died Friday morning. He was 85.

Ives died at his home, where he had slipped into a coma early Wednesday, said his agent and longtime friend, Marjorie Schickel. He had been suffering from complications of mouth cancer. Ives' wife, Dorothy, and her three adult children were with him.

Ashley said Ives — with his trademark goatee, twinkling eyes and round shape — maybe remembered best as a balladeer for the nation's heartland. But he did it all, succeeding on the stage, screen, television and in concert.

Since I was a child, I knew I was going to be a performer," he said in a February 1993 interview, when he was 83. "It was something I knew in my heart of hearts that I would always do."

Roaming the country as a

young man, he picked up songs and stories and sang with the likes of Josh White and Woody Guthrie. Ives chronicled that era in a 1948 autobiography Wayfaring Stranger, written when he was just 38.

At the end of the depression he was in New York City, trying to crack the big time with a passel of homegrown favourites like Goober Peas, My Gal Sal and The Blue Tail Fly, which has the chorus "Jimmie crack corn (and I don't care)."

Without treaty, 40 countries might have A-bomb — U.S. official

WASHINGTON (AP) — If not for the landmark non-proliferation treaty, 40 countries might have atomic weapons today, instead of the five that admit it and the few believed to have them, a top U.S. disarmament official says.

John Hofum, director of the State Department's Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, defended the treaty ahead of next week's international conference on whether to extend the pact. The Clinton administration is pushing

for indefinite extension.

"If the vote were held today, I think there is a very good chance" of gaining the indefinite extension, Mr. Hofum told reporters Thursday. "We're not making any assumptions, however, about the ultimate outcome."

Some developing nations are opposing the extension on the grounds that it creates a ghetto of nuclear have-nots. Egypt has also voiced opposition mainly to pressure Israel, which is believed to have nuclear weapons, to

sign the treaty.

The treaty, which took effect in 1970, offered a bargain: In return for a pledge from nations not to develop nuclear weapons, nuclear powers promised access to peaceful nuclear technology and the elimination of nuclear weapons.

"It's now the case that approximately 40 countries would have the technical and material capability to build nuclear weapons, if they wanted to do that," Mr. Hofum said.

19 charged in raid on Philippine town

IPIL, Philippines (AP) — Police have filed murder, arson and other charges against 19 renegades from the country's largest Muslim rebel group in connection with the raid on this Christian town in which 53 people were killed, officials said Friday.

One of the 19 is a Roman Catholic, according to police Chief Inspector Willy Dangan. All but two remain at large after the April 4 raid, in which the market district of Ipil, a town of about 50,000, was burned down.

Security has been heightened throughout the southern Philippines to prevent attacks during Easter week services. Travellers reported numerous checkpoints on all major highways in Mindanao, second largest of the 7,100 Philippine islands, which contains Ipil.

Charges of murder, kidnapping, arson, robbery and attempted murder were filed Thursday with the local regional trial court.

But Judge Arturo Ventura accepted only the arson charge for the time being because death certificates had not been prepared on all the victims.

The two accused who are in custody include Tomas De Vera, a Catholic but also a member of a renegade gang of former members of the Moro National Liberation Front. The leadership of the front, a Muslim group, condemned the raid and denounced participants as bandits.

12 Filipinos crucified as town celebrates Easter

SAN FERNANDO, Philippines (R) — Twelve people were crucified, scores flailed their backs into a bloody mess and beer and burger vendors did a roaring trade as this Philippines town celebrated Easter with a vengeance Friday.

Balloon sellers and ice cream vendors ringing handbells added to the carnival atmosphere as hundreds of foreign and local visitors descended on hot and dusty San Fernando to watch a gory re-enactment of Christ's execution, an annual fixture in Asia's only Catholic country. The crowd — many spattered with blood from the scourges of the "penitencia" — roared their approval as four-inch stainless steel nails were hammered through the hands of those being crucified.

Organisers howled their disapproval at cameramen jostling to get the best shot of the nails going in and policemen broadcast warnings against pickpockets.

Crucifixions take place in other provinces, but those in San Fernando attract the biggest crowd because they are organised.

Historical records may be sketchy, but the real calvary was almost certainly nothing like this.

For many Christians, Easter is the most solemn event on the calendar, the time when the son of God suffered death on the cross as an atonement for the sins of the world.

Filipinos, however, are among the world's most accomplished throwers of parties and are not noted for their solemnity.

"I thought it would be more religious," bemused tourist Magdalena Rucker, 27, from Ontario, Canada, shouted to a reporter above the din.

"It's very weird," said Lucas Knol, from Nieuw-leusen in the Netherlands. "I think for the Filipino Catholics it's a great show. I don't know what it means for foreigners. I think for them it's a show also," said Rudi Jacks from Stuttgart.

As a warm-up to the main event, scores of penitents — all men — wishing to purge themselves of sin line up to have wounds inflicted on their backs by assistants wielding paddles studded with broken glass.

Many are already scarred from previous purgings.

Clinton backs Russia trip

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton defended his trip next month to Moscow, arguing that the gesture could work to resolve the mounting differences between the two countries.

"What interest would it serve for me to stay at home when, by going there and continuing to engage the Russians, we might make progress," he said in a CNN interview to be aired later Thursday.

Mr. Clinton's decision to attend the May 9 ceremony commemorating the end of World War II has come under fire because of the Russian crackdown on the breakaway republic of Chechnya and Moscow's sale of nuclear technology to Iran.

"I will continue to work on the Iranian thing," said Mr. Clinton, whose administration has asked Moscow to drop the sale of nuclear reactors to Iran and warned that it would seriously strain U.S.-Russian ties.

"Obviously if they do this, it will affect our relationship with them," Mr. Clinton said, noting that the United States had been a big backer of the country's economic reform efforts.

The president noted that the civilian light water reactors slated for the sale were like those North Korea has agreed to use instead of the

potentially weapons-making reactors it presently has.

But he added: "We don't want Iran to have anything, anything that could enable it to move toward developing nuclear capacity, so we do not support this."

The president stressed the progress Russia has made in dismantling, pointing to the withdrawal of troops from the Baltics, the completion of START I and the dismantling of its nuclear arsenal.

He said the dispute over Iran "pales in comparison to all the progress we've made to lower the nuclear threat in the world and all our other agreements with Russia."

Mr. Clinton emphasised that he would be attending the V-E Day ceremony with leaders from all over the world and said it was appropriate to commemorate the event in Russia.

"The Russians lost 20 million people in World War II, far more than any other country did. Their price was great," he said, adding that Russians have felt isolated ever since, believing that their suffering was not recognised.

The president did not mention Chechnya, but before the White House agreed to participate, Moscow vastly scaled down the military element of the ceremony in order to prevent any political embarrassment.

Simpson prosecution witness accused of lying

LOS ANGELES (R) — One of O.J. Simpson's lawyers accused a key prosecution witness of lying and making up facts, while transcripts of a meeting between the judge and a dismissed juror revealed racial conflict within the jury.

Jeanette Harris, a 38-year-old black employment counsellor who was booted off the jury by Judge Lance Ito last week, described in an in-chambers meeting held Wednesday a panel so split along racial lines that jurors shopped, exercised and watched movies separately.

She said tensions escalated to the point where the sole female Hispanic juror could not bear even to breathe the same air as a black juror.

With the trial running for three months and the prospect of another five or six months to go, the specter of mistrial looms large. Six jurors have already been dismissed and only six alternates are left.

The jury consists of eight blacks, three whites and one Hispanic. There are four black alternates, one white and one Hispanic.

In court, defence attorney

Barry Scheck grilled crime scene specialist Dennis Fung for a fifth day, hounding him mercilessly as he accused him of lying and making up facts. Mr. Fung had previously testified that detective Philip Vannatter had handed him a vial of Simpson's blood on June 13, 1994, the day after the American football hero's ex-wife and her friend were murdered.

But Mr. Scheck played a news videotape showing Mr. Fung and his assistant putting evidence in their crime scene truck at Simpson's estate and locking the truck before Mr. Vannatter arrived.

The defence claims Mr. Fung did not receive Simpson's blood until June 14, giving police time to smear part of the sample on other evidence, including socks and Simpson's white Ford Bronco.

Simpson, who went on to become a TV pitchman and actor after becoming an American sports legend, has pleaded not guilty in the stabbing murders of his former wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and Ronald Goldman.

Chernobyl closure will end Ukraine's grim legacy

KIEV (R) — Ukraine has agreed to close down the Chernobyl nuclear power station by the year 2000, bringing in sight an end to one of the grimmest legacies of the country's Soviet past.

Ukrainian and European Union (EU) officials said Thursday that President Leonid Kuchma had told an EU delegation it would shut down two reactors still functioning at the plant, site of the world's worst nuclear accident in 1986.

In exchange, it asked Western countries to help finance schemes to bridge the gap created in Ukraine's energy network — Chernobyl produces five per cent of the country's power.

"This is the first time that the Ukrainian authorities have clearly announced a date for the final and full closure of the Chernobyl site," French Environment Minister Michel Barnier, representing France's EU presidency, told a news conference.

"This is a contract of faith between Ukraine and the countries of the G-7 and the European Union. It is a courageous and important decision."

Ukrainian officials said they had proposed construction of a thermal station near the stricken plant to make up for lost electricity. Chernobyl's director put the cost of replacement at \$4.4 billion and said the West should help pay it.

Mr. Barnier said the Kiev government was to draw up a concrete timetable by May 15 for bringing Chernobyl's



Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma (left) shakes hands with French Environment Minister Michel Barnier prior to their meeting in Kiev (AFP photo)

reactors out of service. He said the EU and the G-7 leading industrialised countries would study the proposal as well as plans to complete three unfinished reactors at other Ukrainian nuclear plants.

Ukraine's leadership had resisted a decision by last year's G-7 summit in Naples to press for closure of Chernobyl without plans to plug the gap in its energy sector, largely dependent on imports of gas from Russia.

The country's vocal nuclear lobby said it was capable of operating the plant without incident.

Mr. Kuchma and other top officials said the plant and the aftermath of the disaster were inherited from Soviet times and therefore to be tackled by the international community.

The fire and explosion in Chernobyl's fourth reactor on April 26, 1986 caused upheaval just a year into Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika reforms.

After remaining silent about it for two days, Soviet authorities provided full details in the first concrete example of "glasnost," or openness, in the media.

Thousands of volunteers, known as "likvidators," hurriedly built a rail line and poured sand and concrete from helicopters to build a concrete "tomb" around the blazing reactor. That tomb is now cracking and is to be replaced.

Radioactive clouds spread over most of Europe. Evacuation of local residents was slow and bungled. Public opinion swung heavily against nuclear power in the

former Soviet Union.

Ukraine's parliament ordered Chernobyl to be closed by the end of 1993 and imposed a moratorium on completing unfinished reactors. As post-Soviet economic decline deepened, both measures were reversed.

Vladimir Gorbunin, chairman of Ukraine's Security Council, said the outcome of Thursday's discussions was a step forward, ending any link between general aid to Ukraine and the station.

Mr. Barnier said neither Mr. Kuchma nor his acting Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk had put a price tag on any aid.

"What I heard... is a commitment to a date to shut Chernobyl completely by the end of the century," he said. "Perhaps our dialogue of the deaf is over."

Vandals behead statue of naked queen

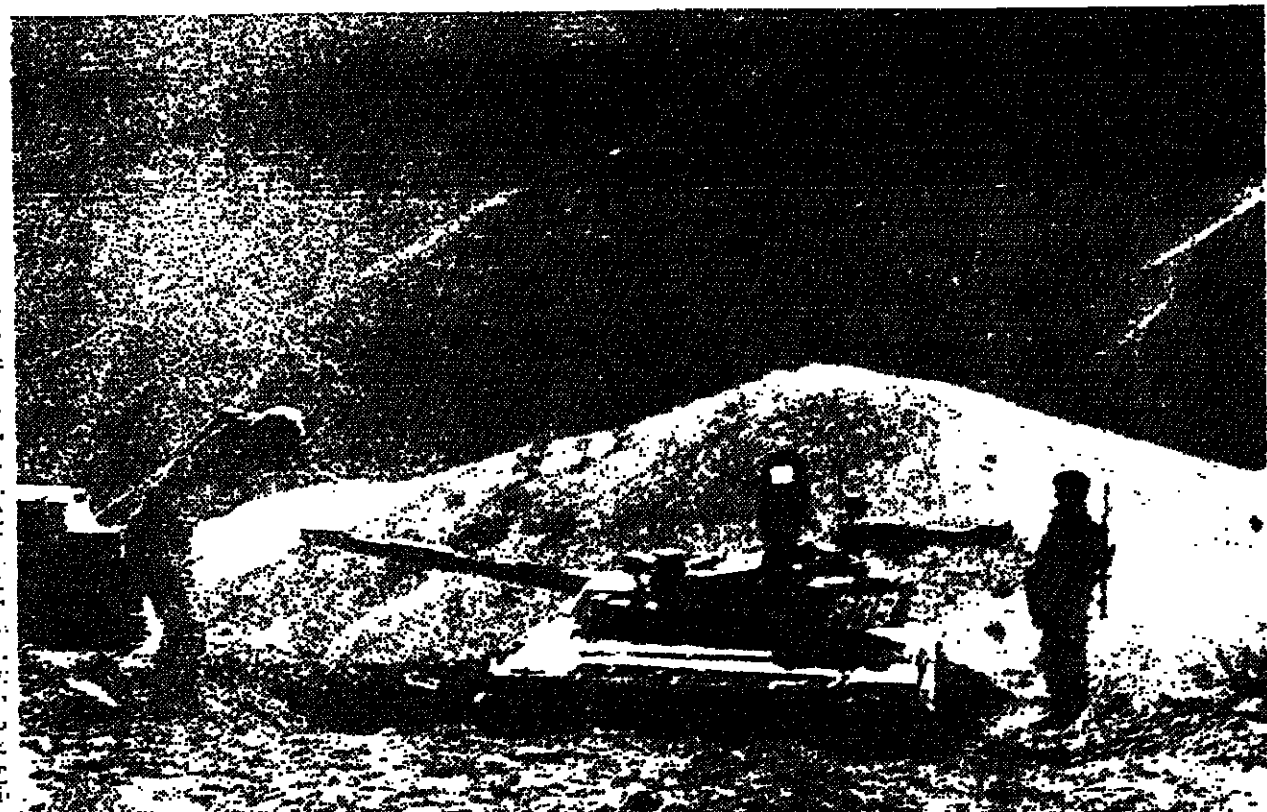
CANBERRA (R) — Vandals beheaded a controversial sculpture of a nude Queen Elizabeth in Australia's capital. Canberra police said. The head of the statue was still missing and nobody had claimed responsibility or demanded a ransom for its return, a police spokesman said Friday. A nude statue of the queen's husband, Prince Philip, sitting beside her on a park bench appeared untouched, he said. The rusting ferro-concrete sculpture of a flabily naked queen and her paunchy husband sitting together on the park bench beside Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin outraged Australia's monarchists, who want the British ruler to remain head of state. The concrete queen sat, wearing only a tiara on her now missing head, with her legs clamped tightly together and her arms resting on her lap while the stone Prince Philip sat back casually with his legs wide open. The work, titled Down By The Lake With Liz And Phil is part of a month-long outdoor sculpture exhibition, approved by the National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA). The NCPA is a federal government body chaired by an avowed republican. Monarchists, who want the sculpture removed, accused the NCPA and sculptor Greg Taylor of pursuing Prime Minister Paul Keating's republican agenda to change the constitution and dump the queen as head-of-state by the year 2001.

China panda loan criticised

GLAND, Switzerland (R) — The World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) sprang to the defence of its famous emblem, the giant panda, and criticised a Chinese decision to lend a wild-born panda to a zoo in Berlin. Yan Yan, a nine-year-old female, is due to arrive in Berlin Friday under an agreement between the city and Chinese authorities. But WWF said the loan and a similar loan to a zoo in San Diego, California, could harm attempts to reestablish the panda, an endangered species of which only around 1,000 remain in the wild. "WWF fears that approval of these loans could set a dangerous precedent and lead to a further depletion of an already fragile wild panda population," the organisation said in a statement. Yan Yan was removed from the wild when she was three months old in the belief that she had been abandoned by her mother. But WWF said mother pandas regularly leave their cubs for up to two days without any ill effects while searching for food. WWF says panda loans should only be for breeding and research, should only involve captive-bred animals, and must generate funds for panda conservation.

White House may close Pennsylvania Avenue

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Reeling from a suicide plane crash, gunfire and the shooting death of a knife-wielding homeless man, the White House is considering closing the historic Pennsylvania Avenue that fronts the mansion. Spokesman Michael McCurry said Monday that the Secret Service had issued a plan for closing the wide, tree-lined street to traffic and that the Treasury Department was reviewing it. It would be an unprecedented step for the White House, which has always kept its doors open to the public. And shutting off the busy street, which boasts the executive mansion on one end, and the Capitol on the other, could cause some serious traffic jams. But last year, the White House was besieged with attacks. While President Bill Clinton escaped harm, the Secret Service has had many a sleepless night since. In September, a pilot crashed his small plane into the lawn just in front of the east wing of the mansion before security even knew he was in the area. The pilot was killed but no one else was injured. Then in October, a gunman opened fire on the front of the White House, discharging some two dozen rounds before two passers-by wrestled him to the ground. Again, no one was hurt in the attack. But security agents were so rattled by the events — which also included the discovery of several bullets near the southern facade — that when a homeless man wielded a knife near the fence on Pennsylvania, police shot and killed him.



A file picture of a Russian Border Guard of the 12th Frontier Post digging a shelter for a tank as a colleague

overlooks the area close to the Tajik-Afghan border (AFP photo)

Yeltsin urges action as Tajik death toll mounts

DUSHANBE (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin renewed his calls to boost defences on the Tajik-Afghan border Friday as the death toll in fighting between Frontier Guards and rebels continued to mount.

Dozens of people were reported killed in the latest

flare-up of fighting in the remote eastern region of Gorno-Badakhshan, where opposition forces based there and Afghan-based Islamic rebels have been staging attacks.

Tajik Deputy Security Minister Anatoly Kuptsov told a news conference that

30 Islamic opposition fighters and six Commonwealth of Independent States Border Guards were killed in three hours of battles Thursday.

Dozens of rebels and 35 Border Guards have been killed in earlier clashes.

ITAR-TASS news agency said two Tajik soldiers were shot dead on the outskirts of the capital Dushanbe early Friday.

The agency said Mr. Yeltsin, on holiday in the southern resort of Sochi, met Border Guards Chief Andrei Nikolayev for the second time in two days. The president was likely to return to Moscow Sunday.

"The (Yeltsin) suggested making maximum use of the means and forces available to defend the border, if necessary bringing in collective peacekeeping forces," TASS quoted the president's press service as saying.

Interfax News Agency said CIS foreign ministers, along with defence ministers and border guards commanders, were due to meet on April 21 to work out joint measures.

And in the Kazakh town of Chirchik Friday, the presidents of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan met behind closed doors to discuss what they could do to quell the fighting.

In Afghanistan, government sources and witnesses said Russian jets bombed the northern town of Talqana and a border district Thursday, killing 125 civilians and wounding 250 in the fourth day of bombing in two provinces on the Tajik border.

Russia has denied all such accusations. On Friday Inter-

fax quoted the Russian Armed Forces press office as saying: "Russian aircraft did not bomb Afghan territory."

The fighting on the border breaches a ceasefire agreed last year between Dushanbe and opposition leaders who fled to Afghanistan after losing a civil war in 1992.

Mr. Yeltsin Thursday backed sending military aid to Tajikistan after a new clash in which Mr. Kuptsov said a 100-strong opposition unit attacked a convoy on its way to Khorog, the administrative centre of Gorno-Badakhshan.

Mr. Kuptsov said this week's escalation of fighting was provoked by a clampdown from Frontier Guards in the Pamir of Badakhshan. "The main channel for smuggling arms and fighters was there. In one case last year 100 people crossed the border. But now we have closed the border," Mr. Kuptsov said.

Interfax said talks between Dushanbe and opposition leaders would take place in Moscow on April 17 and 18.

A Tajik opposition leader said Thursday his party would only agree to talks in Moscow if Border Guards withdraw from the frontier and Moscow recognised a ceasefire signed last year.

He said it banned all troop deployment in Gorno-Badakhshan.

"If these three conditions are not met, the negotiations will have to take place somewhere other than in Moscow," Abdu-Nabi Satarzade, president of the opposition Democratic Party of Tajikistan, told Reuters by telephone.

Russian troops close in on rebel stronghold in Chechenya

SLEPTSOVSK, Russia (R) — Russian troops closed in on the last rebel stronghold in Chechenya's lowland Friday, surrounding the village of Bamut after pounding it with shells throughout the night.

The roar of explosions echoed through Sleptovsk, on the border between Chechenya and Ingushetia, rattling windows and shaking buildings. Sleptovsk is 25 kilometres from Bamut.

The capture of Bamut would effectively give Russian forces control over all the fertile and industrially-developed areas in northern and central Chechenya, although the rebels have set up bases in southern mountains ready to wage a guerrilla war.

In Moscow, the Interior Ministry said the commander of Russia's defence and Interior Ministry troops in the breakaway region had been removed. A ministry spokesman said outgoing Commander Anatoly Kulikov was "tired" and needed to be replaced.

TASS said a new commanding officer, Gen. Mikhail Yegorov, had been appointed temporarily to cover for Gen. Kulikov's absence. Gen. Yegorov was previously in charge of the Interior Ministry's department dealing with organised crime.

The change in military

command lines coincided with a fresh bout of criticism at home of the way Russia has conducted its four-month campaign to crush Chechenya's independence bid.

Chechens say Russian soldiers massacred civilians in the western Chechen town of Samashki last week.

Officials from the International Committee of the Red Cross have said Russian troops killed at least 250 people, using "disproportionate" force to capture the town. Russia's Interior Ministry has denied the charge.

Moscow's troops have already seized most rebel strongholds in Chechenya, which declared itself independent of Moscow in 1991. Many towns in the breakaway region have been reduced to rubble in shelling, and fighting and thousands of people have died.

Correspondents who visited Bamut before the latest assaults said it had been virtually abandoned by residents, although Chechen fighters were holed up in a concrete bunker in a disused missile site.

ITAR-TASS news agency quoted officials at the Russian military headquarters near the border with Chechenya as saying Russian forces had surrounded Bamut Friday, but had not yet entered the village.

Interfax News Agency quoted Chechen military sources as saying a Russian SU-25 fighter jet and two helicopters had been shot down Friday. The Russian military denied the charge.

Both sides have frequently exaggerated their successes in the campaign and reports of casualties are hard to verify. Interfax quoted Russian Deputy Interior Minister Alexander Kulikov as saying the remaining rebel fighters would have been driven to the mountains by summer and sealed off there.

He expected no more major armed clashes, but said Russian troops would have to fight with small groups of fighters loyal to Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev to defend key installations.

"Dudayev and his people do not want to restore normal life in Chechenya and they are doing all they can to turn the population against the constitutional powers," he said.

On Wednesday, Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev said Chechenya's separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, who has been missing since Russian forces took control of the Chechen capital Grozny in February, is "either dead or wounded."

Speaking to the press during a visit to a strategic missile site at Irkutsk, Siberia,

Gen. Grachev gave no details on what could have killed or wounded Mr. Dudayev, a former Soviet Air force general who proclaimed Chechenya independent in 1991.

The minister did not name his "unconfirmed sources" for the reports on Mr. Dudayev, Interfax News Agency said.

The Federal Security Service, the successor to the KGB which has been ordered to find and capture Mr. Dudayev, said Wednesday it had no information on Mr. Dudayev — healthy or otherwise.

The ITAR-TASS news agency said meanwhile that Mr. Dudayev had appeared overnight Tuesday on a banned television channel, claiming that he had not fled the country and would never do so.

"I am like you all. We do not have another homeland and I will never run away anywhere," he reportedly said.

Gen. Grachev said there remained some 4,000 to 5,000 separatist fighters in Chechenya, ready to harass the much more powerful forces sent by Moscow.

Ninety per cent of the separatist forces had been killed, captured or forced to flee, he said.

Chirac stretches lead despite threat

PARIS (R) — Conservative Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac stretched his lead in the French presidential campaign Friday despite a threat by extreme-right Jean-Marie Le Pen to boycott him in the decisive run-off ballot.

Mr. Le Pen, credited with 13 per cent of the vote in the latest opinion polls, told a rally in Toulouse his anti-immigrant National Front Movement would not give the Paris mayor a single vote, because he was a "traitor" and a closet Socialist.

"If by misfortune Jacques Chirac reaches the (May 7) second round of this election, he has grounds to be worried because he will not get a single vote from the National Front," he said.

Nevertheless opinion polls have suggested almost half of Mr. Le Pen's electorate would switch to Mr. Chirac in the run-off.

The latest opinion survey — published two days before a blackout on polls takes effect in the run-up to the April 23 first round of voting — pointed to a run-off between Mr. Chirac and Socialist Lionel Jospin, which the Paris mayor would easily win.

The IFOP poll for the daily Liberation credited Mr. Chirac with 26.5 per cent ahead of Mr. Jospin on 21 and Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, a Gaullist like Mr. Chirac, on just 17.5.

Mr. Balladur's score was close to his lowest in the campaign, suggesting his chances are fading despite an unusually high number of undecided voters, estimated at 33 to 39 per cent.

Communist candidate Robert Hue, surfing on a wave of labour unrest, held the biggest rally of any candidate so far in the Paris suburb of Le Bourget on Thursday night.

Organisers said more than 20,000 people turned out to hear Mr. Hue, credited with nine per cent in the IFOP poll, proclaim: "Let's put our struggle into the ballot boxes. Each (Communist) vote will say: enough unemployment, enough injustice."

Mr. Chirac hammered home his own message that France is in social crisis and must do more to combat unemployment, poverty and homelessness.

At a rally in the Champagne capital of Reims, he denounced "a France of inequalities where money goes to speculators and wheeler-dealer businessmen... where salaries are too low for those whose work is their vocation: nurses, social workers, magistrates, teachers."

The Paris mayor called for a better balance between capital and labour with effort and rewards more evenly distributed.

Russia plans to sell missiles to U.S.

MOSCOW (R) — Russia plans to sell a batch of ultra-modern surface-to-air missiles to the United States in an unprecedented deal which it hopes to complete next week, a Russian official said Friday.

A spokesman for the central Rosvooruzheniye body which negotiates official arms

sales abroad confirmed Moscow planned to sell the mobile S-300 V missile system but did not specify which U.S. department hoped to buy it.

"The Russian government has decided to sell these missiles to the United States. We are currently working on the contract," Rosvooruzheniye spokesman Valery Pogreby-

enkov said.

"The contract could be sealed next week."

Izvestia newspaper outlined the agreement Friday, saying the deal would be worth \$60 million. Pogrebyenkov declined to say exactly how much the deal would cost, but said Izvestia's figure was "more or less right."

Mandela fires wife for 2nd time

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African President Nelson Mandela Friday sacked his estranged wife Winnie for the second time after she was reinstated as deputy minister two days before over a technicality.

"After due reflection I have decided in accordance with the powers vested in me by the constitution to terminate Mrs. Winnie Mandela's appointment and to appoint Mrs. Brigitte Mabandla to the post of deputy minister of arts, culture, science and technology," Mr. Mandela said in a statement.

Mr. Mandela said the dismissal of Mrs. Mandela would take effect from April 18.

"The overriding consideration, as in this instance, is what the president believes is necessary in pursuit of good

government and the interests of the country as a whole," Mr. Mandela's statement added.

Mrs. Mandela, separated from her husband since 1992, launched a court action Monday to declare her March 27 dismissal from the government of national unity unlawful and unconstitutional.

Mr. Mandela Wednesday reinstated Mrs. Mandela as deputy arts minister because her sacking two weeks ago was invalid.

His main black political opponent, Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who is the president's partner in the national unity government, had complained he should have been consulted on the sacking in terms of the constitution.

Mrs. Mandela, a frequent

critic of her husband's government, said her rights had been violated by her sacking and demanded to know the grounds for her dismissal.

But in his statement Friday, the South African leader said he had consulted with Mr. Buthelezi and his two deputy presidents, Thabo Mbeki and F.W. de Klerk, over Mrs. Mandela's position.

"There is no requirement for reasons behind such decisions to be made public," Mr. Mandela said.

"I would once again wish to thank Mrs. Mandela for the service she had rendered to the government. I sincerely hope that this action will help her to reflect and improve on her conduct in positions of leadership," he added.

Portugal objects to EU fish deal with Canada

BRUSSELS (R) — European Union (EU) ambassadors broke off crucial talks Friday on settling a bitter fishing row with Canada after Portugal refused to accept the share-out of the EU's catch.

"A lot of progress has been made and we hope to complete the progress very quickly," said a Spanish diplomat. Another diplomat said: "We could reconvene at any time."

But a German diplomat said he was sceptical about

the chances of the ambassadors meeting again Friday, opening up the possibility that the talks would drag on through the Easter weekend.

Diplomats said the ambassadors were in touch with their governments over the latest hitch in the long drawn-out efforts to resolve the row with Canada over fishing for Greenland halibut (turbot) off Newfoundland.

Portugal frustrated final agreement in a dispute over how an increased EU quota of the fish, the last commer-

cially viable species in the once-rich fishing grounds, should be shared out.

"We are against the deal. We must still solve the quota problem," a Portuguese spokesman told reporters when asked if Lisbon would hold up the deal.

Portugal could in theory be outvoted by the other 14 EU states, but EU sources said this was unlikely to happen as it would create more problems.

The EU and Canada said Thursday they were on the

verge of a deal after unused quotas awarded to Russia and possibly other non-EU states were reallocated to Spain, but not to Portugal.

Spain and Portugal, the only EU countries fishing the area, were previously offered 10,000 tonnes of a total quota of 27,000.

The figure, divided up on the basis of 80 per cent for Madrid and 20 per cent for Lisbon, represented a large decrease for both sides on the amount they took in 1994.

N. Korea said to give ground in nuclear talks

BERLIN (R) — The United States and North Korea have postponed further talks to anchor a key nuclear agreement until Tuesday, but appeared to have made some progress towards ending a wrangle over the supply of nuclear reactors.

Replacing Pyongyang's plutonium-producing atomic plants with a safer alternative is central to the accord Washington says will divert North Korea from developing nuclear arms.

South Korean news agency, Yonhap, said Friday North Korean negotiators had put forward proposals in Berlin which would allow some involvement by Seoul in the supply of new reactors.

U.S. and North Korean officials in Berlin were unavailable for comment.

South Korean media reported the North also wanted to link implementation of the nuclear pact to the signing of a peace treaty with the United States, replacing an armistice agreed at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

light-water plants. Light-water reactors produce less plutonium that can be used to make a bomb.

The United States has been pressing Pyongyang to bow to its demands that South Korea should be the main contractor with a major say in the design and construction of the reactors.

Seoul and Japan have agreed to foot most of the \$4.5 billion bill for North Korea's nuclear transition, including energy supplies until the new plants are plugged into the power grid in about six years' time.

The project was agreed under an accord signed by North Korea and the United States in Geneva last October. In return, Pyongyang froze its nuclear programme and halted construction of two big nuclear reactors.

Diplomatic sources said the main issue now would focus on how far North Korea will allow the south to take part in the operation and whether it will continue to insist on a U.S. contractor heading the project.

"If this is the case and (North Korea) has made this proposal, then they have given some ground," one

source said. "But I can't imagine them letting the South have complete control."

South Korea has said it will have no part in the project if other reactors are used. Seoul was believed to be covering around 60 per cent of the bill and to make the pay-off palatable at home, it wants contracts and jobs to go to home-based firms.

But Pyongyang suspects political motives behind the offer. One diplomatic source said Seoul may be looking to future unification of the Korean peninsula and if its reactors are in place in the North it would make an integrated power grid easier to set up.

North Korea wants to wrap up the Berlin talks by April 21 and has repeatedly warned it will tear up the Geneva pact if Washington fails to agree to terms by then.

Political analysts have dismissed Pyongyang's threats as part of its negotiating tactics and said it would try to wring maximum concessions from the Americans, not least Washington's agreement to establish diplomatic relations.

North Korea's Communist Party paper Rodong Shinmun reported that Pyon-

gyang wanted peace talks with the United States before it implemented the nuclear deal, Seoul's Naewoe Press said.

Meanwhile, the United States will deploy "a small number" of additional troops in South Korea this month for a military exercise, the Combined Forces Command (CFC) said here Friday.

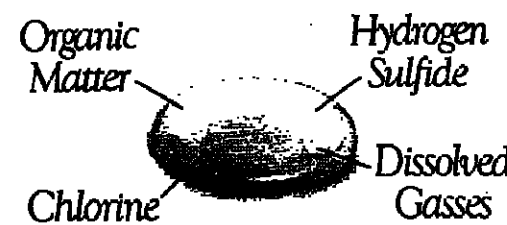
The CFC gave no figures for the number of U.S.-based troops that will take part in the South Korean-U.S. drill, the second of its kind in two years.

But in a press release it said the exercise will last from "late April to mid-May," and involve "a small number of U.S. forces deploying to and exercising in the theatre."

Some 37,000 U.S. troops are based in South Korea, most of them along the demilitarised zone facing forward elements of North Korea's million-plus strong army.

In 1994 and again this year Washington and Seoul decided to cancel massive annual defensive war games known as Team Spirit to spur the Pyongyang-Washington nuclear talks.

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Expectations for a parley

POLITICAL PROBLEMS rather than economic factors still stand in the way of the success of the Amman economic conference on the Middle East and North African scheduled for October to consolidate the peace process. The summit has been credited as offering the best assurance yet against reversing the tide of peace in the region. However, the continuing stalemate on the Syrian and Palestinian fronts with Israel threatens the viability of the conference. The only thing that could prevent the repetition of the big disappointment at last year's Casablanca conference is tangible progress on these two tracks. Otherwise, the Amman parley would achieve very little.

No wonder the steering committee of the conference put on a brave face in the wake of its last week's preparatory meeting. U.S. Middle East Coordinator Dennis Ross dubbed the committee's meeting as "very successful," and reminded the international community that "those who have made peace need to see that there are benefits for having done so."

The first clear hurdle in this context is the observation that not all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict have attained peace. Unless and until peace is regionalised, there can be no serious talk about collecting all economic dividends that can be yielded.

Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin was less sanguine about these prospects when he predicted that "it is unlikely that the Amman conference or any other conference will bear immediate fruit." Perhaps Mr. Beilin was also thinking of the formidable political problems that still face the peace process.

In any case, there are other obstacles that await resolution. For instance, there has been no apparent agreement on the proposed Middle East development bank. The U.S., Jordan and Israel favour the establishment of such a bank, but the European Union (EU) and the Arab Gulf countries seem to be noncommittal. Equally disturbing is the lack of coordination and cooperation on the conference's strategy and priorities. The business community in Jordan, for example, has repeatedly expressed their concerns about this flaw. These and other related shortcomings may end up spelling problems for the Amman summit unless a more determined effort is exerted on the political, economic and financial levels.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily warned of a possible civil war in Gaza in the light of a decision by the Palestine National Authority (PNA) to register all guns in the hands of the people prior to collecting them. Mahmoud Rimawi said that the Islamic Jihad and Hamas have already refused to comply with the orders and said that they would be willing to stop all military activities once the Israelis have dismantled Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip. The PNA ought to study the situation carefully, and ought to demand that the Israelis pledge to dismantle the settlements in return for collecting the weapons, the writer suggested. He said that the mere presence of the settlements and the occupation forces provided sufficient cause for violence as they represent a provocation to the Arab population. The writer said that the PNA should demand that Israel respect and honour its deals with the Palestinians in return for action to prevent further attacks on Israelis in the Gaza Strip. He said that President Arafat's accusations that the Israelis were trying to provoke a civil war in Gaza were justified, but that Arafat ought to follow up on these accusations by presenting the Palestinian demands to the Israeli government and seeking to bolster national unity.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour daily commented on Crown Prince Hassan's call on the concerned authorities to conduct a scientific and objective study of the Jordanian labour market by urging the Labour Ministry to stem the employment of guest workers at the expense of the Jordanian job-seekers. Prince Hassan's call places the Labour Ministry face-to-face with its responsibility towards the presence of thousands of non-Jordanians working in the Kingdom, said Mohammad Daoud. The time has come for the government to re-examine the terms and conditions for employing foreign workers, especially as more and more Jordanians are becoming unemployed; and ought to legislate strict rules on issuing visas except for a minority whose skill is rare and could not be found in Jordan. The time has come for the Labour Ministry to fix the minimum wages of workers because disparity between wages and the lack of rules concerning their basic rights have led employees to prefer Egyptian to Jordanian workers. Taking Prince Hassan's statement into serious consideration and acting upon it, said the writer, was bound to help deal with the unemployment issue facing the country.

Jordanian Perspective

Gaza tension throws doubt on peace process

THE ESCALATING tension in the autonomous Palestinian territories after last week's suicide bombings has thrown the darkest shadow yet over the future of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. For many outside the region it may be an Israeli-Palestinian or Palestinian-Palestinian affair, but it is a serious concern to us in Jordan since it is inevitable that destabilisation on the Palestinian side will have repercussions in the Kingdom.

The question that should be asked and answered is: What can we in Jordan do to arrest the situation? And who can be held responsible for the flare-up that has raised the prospect of an inter-Palestinian war?

Notwithstanding repeated Israeli denials, the doubt would not go away that the black hands of secret Israeli agencies were behind the April 2 explosion in the Gaza's Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood.

The blast, which killed at least six people in a densely populated area, came too pat to be attributed to an accident or as something engineered by the Palestinian security apparatus.

For one thing, it was too controlled to be an accident, given that the number of casualties was limited; definitely someone took extra care to ensure that not many civilians would be caught in the blast.

Obviously, the reasoning was that high civilian casualties in the explosion would have made things get totally out of control for the Palestinian self-rule authority, something that Israel cannot afford to let happen.

Definitely that scenario also leaves open the possibility that the Palestinian security men were somehow involved in the blast. But then the professional way it was handled was beyond their skills.

So there are unmistakable signs that Israeli hands could have set off the explosion in their intense efforts to avenge Palestinian bombings in Israel and eliminate the so-called

"engineer" — the man who reputedly built many of the Hamas bombs that went off in Israeli cities.

The response that the blast drew from Hamas and Islamic Jihad was not a surprise; it was only a question of when and where. As such, the two suicide bombings in the Gaza Strip last Sunday which killed seven Israelis and one American only underlined that violence begets violence. And that is what we are concerned with, particularly that the crackdown ordered by the self-rule authority and the defiance of the hardline groups appear to be heralding more violence and tension.

There is no magic formula to resolve the problem, which involves unshakable deep-rooted beliefs on the part of some — who categorically reject any dealings with the State of Israel — and pragmatism on the part of others — who realise the truth that Israel is here to stay and there cannot be any escape from dealing with the Jewish state.

In this context, Palestinian self-rule authority chief Yasser Arafat's message to Jordan to contain the activities of Jordan-based Hamas members and spokesmen was at best short-sighted. Regardless of what action Jordan took in response, the fact remains that the root cause of Mr. Arafat's problems is not the statements issued in Amman by Hamas leaders, but his own approach to the situation.

But Israel cannot shirk from its responsibility. Let no one forget that the latest escalation of violence came amid whisperings among Israelis that let the Gaza Strip become the yearned-for state of Palestine and let the West Bank remain under Israeli occupation with autonomous links with whoever is in power in Gaza.

It was as if the Israelis were waiting for the internal security situation to deteriorate to a level where the world would be seriously alarmed before very conveniently presenting the proposal that, given the inability of the self-rule authority to control anti-Israeli attacks, Israel has

no choice but to put a lid on handing over the West Bank to Mr. Arafat.

Quite simply, it also appears to mean the realisation of predictions in the Middle East and elsewhere at the outset of the autonomy accord signed in Washington in September 1993 that the "Gaza-Jericho first" formula was also destined to be "Gaza-Jericho last."

Adding further support to the theory that Israel handed over Gaza to Mr. Arafat only because it could not control the strip was the refusal by Yitzhak Rabin last week to redeploy Israeli troops in the Gaza Strip. Not that such move is practical, but it is a sure bet that Israel will not want to send troops to the Gaza Strip even if Mr. Arafat sent an invitation engraved in gold.

Given the overall chaos in the Palestinian-Israeli track of negotiations, it is imperative that the main sponsor of the peace process, the United States, takes a very close look at why things are going so dramatically wrong in which appeared to have been a carefully orchestrated scenario when the autonomy accord got off the ground.

While there is no doubt that dramatic solutions are not round the corner, the U.S. and Israel could start with basic change: That change should mean an unequivocal and public undertaking that Israel will withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza completely. The process that should follow such an undertaking could vary depending upon the circumstances, but there cannot be any more ambiguity over the realities of the situation: Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the 1967 war and it has to withdraw entirely from those areas with no preconditions, period.

Such an undertaking, which will clear a lot of distrust in the air, may not be a tailor-made answer to the current crisis, but it is sure to go a long way in shoring up the disappearing Palestinian confidence in the peace process. By extension, it also means that we in Jordan could breathe a little more easily.

Lebanon scarred by war that began 20 years ago

By Andrew Tarnowski
Reuters

BEIRUT — Ten years ago Rashid Keng got up each morning, grabbed his Kalashnikov rifle and walked 50 metres to the green line where he and his comrades fought the Christian militiamen who shot at them from across the street.

"I lived with my family on the frontline, so the memories I've got are chilly memories of death, shelling, snipers, thrills," Mr. Keng recalls of his days as a Muslim militiaman during Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war.

This week is the 20th anniversary of the start of the war that ruined Lebanon.

Today, aged 32, Mr. Keng drives a gleaming 500 cc Honda motorbike along the green line, still lined with bullet-riddled houses and collapsed apartment blocks left from 15 years of fighting between Muslim and Christian forces, Syrian shelling and Israeli bomb-

ing. He is thriving as a programme director at Future Television, a Beirut station owned by billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri, and is married with a baby daughter.

But he says he, like every Lebanese, is still struggling to free his life from the bitter shadow of war.

It erupted on April 13, 1975, when Christian fighters ambushed a Palestinian bus in a Christian suburb of Beirut, killing 22, and then found themselves facing a coalition of leftist, Muslim and Palestinian forces.

The fighting, sucked in Syria and Israel, Iran and Iraq, the PLO and a multinational force of U.S., French, Italian and British troops. It spawned a host of militias, hijackers and hostage-takers, and fundamentalist Shiite groups like Hizbollah (Party of God), which became a force on the regional scene.

At least 100,000 people were killed, thousands crippled, nearly 500,000 lost



their homes and 500,000 fled the country.

When it ended Lebanon was no longer a playground for the rich, the Switzerland of the Middle East.

Up to \$40 billion had fled the once-thriving banking system, the currency was shattered, the famous hotels bombed out, the middle class was destroyed, the poorer classes penniless and the roads, telephones, electricity and services were wrecked.

Five years later, Christian commentators doubt

openly that national sovereignty survived, saying government subservience to Syria created de facto confederation of the two countries.

Mr. Hariri has launched a \$12-billion 10 year infrastructure reconstruction plan. He hopes the private sector will chip in with another \$20 billion to build industry, agriculture, tourism and a thriving financial services sector.

Already new buildings have mushroomed across the country and the \$1.8 billion Sidiere company is

rebuilding central Beirut. Gleaming luxury cars abound and hordes of expensive restaurants and nightclubs cater to the ostentatiously rich.

But they exist side-by-side with widespread misery. Most refugees are still unable to return to their wrecked or damaged villages, and the friendly village co-existence between communities of Greek, Latin and Maronite Christians and Shiite, Sunni and Druze Muslims may be gone forever.

In Beirut the poor, the homeless and the squatters rummage in garbage containers and legless war victims risk death beginning from makeshift cars in the road in rush-hour traffic.

For Mr. Keng, too, the bitterness lingers.

"I lost 15 years of my youth and fun, and they were simply replaced by fear, aggression and a corruption state of mind," he says. "I'm trying to make up those lost years by being constructive for a change."

"But every single step take is directly affected by the war, and I believe every single step any Lebanese making is affected directly by the war."

In southern Lebanon fighting still rages as Israel troops occupying a border strip come under daily attack from Muslim guerrillas trying to drive them out.

Shaken by shelling and bombing, the south is the last active Arab-Israeli frontline and the fighting carries the ever-present threat of a flare-up that could engulf the rest of the country.

For Central Bank Governor Riad Salameh, Lebanon's economic recovery is remarkable, but lack of peace is slowing capital inflow and efforts to create a finance and tourism centre.

"If peace occurs and it is a decent one it will take out all the uncertainties about the future of Lebanon... and will generate a massive movement of capital into the country," Mr. Salameh told Reuters.

Israel driving Palestinians into civil war

Reviewed by Elia Nasralah

ISRAEL'S ARBITRARY measures against the Palestinians, especially in the wake of two bomb attacks in the Gaza Strip last week, the situation in Iraq and domestic issues featured prominently in the local Arab press in the past week.

Criticising Israeli government policies and its shifting of the blame on President Arafat, a writer in Al Ra'i said that the Palestine National Authority (PNA) headed by Arafat had no power to control resistance activity against the Israelis outside the self-rule areas. Both Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups have repeated that they intend to carry out their attacks outside the self-rule areas but Arafat and his government cannot achieve miracles and prevent resistance activity in areas controlled by the Israeli forces, noted Sultan Al Hattab. The writer said that the Israelis seem to be betting on a civil war between the Palestinians so that they can be weakened to a degree that they would not be able to carry out further resistance against Israel.

Ahmad Al Misleh, writing in Al Ra'i, said that continued resistance activities against the Israeli occupation forces do not surprise any one and they are a natural result of Israeli repression. Resistance actions by Hamas and Islamic Jihad come as a reply to Israel's intransigent stand with regard to the Jewish settlements in Arab lands, the continued detention of thousands of Arabs and starvation of the Palestinian people, said the writer.

ter. Israel has so far confiscated 74 per cent of the lands in the occupied West Bank as well as the main parts of the Gaza Strip to build settlements — a policy which the Israeli government continues to follow and was bound to face its consequences.

Al Dustour daily warned that unless the Palestinians join their forces and deny the Israelis the fulfilment of their desire to see a Palestinian civil war, Palestinian rights can never be regained. The paper said that the Palestine National Authority (PNA) is now cracking down on the Islamic groups under pressure from the Israelis thus creating new tension.

The PNA decision to collect weapons is expected to be met with stiff resistance. The PNA and the other groups ought to understand that they both shoulder equal responsibility in maintaining national unity which is the prime priority for them in the face of the common foe, added the paper.

Writing in Al Dustour Taher Adwan said that Israel's recent announcement that it would soon embark on building new Jewish settlements was paving the ground for further acts of violence. The writer said that perhaps Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was trying to rally support for his party to win the 1996 general elections by making such announcements but this is a dangerous game which is bound to backfire and draw further suicidal attacks on Israeli positions. The writer said

that Israel should return to the Palestinians their lands as it did with Jordan and Egypt in order to reach peace with its neighbours. Only through the exchange of land for peace can security and stability be restored added the writer.

A writer in Al Dustour commented on a recent tour in the region by Dennis Ross, the chief U.S. peace mediator, by saying that it ended in total failure. Saleh Qallab said while Ross was trying to reconcile the Israeli and the Syrian positions, the Israelis were pursuing their atrocities, inviting further bombing attacks on their troops and civilians. The incidents in the Gaza Strip and Israel's intransigent position with regard to withdrawals from the Golan Heights rendered Ross's mission a failure, said the writer. The sound of the explosions in Gaza rose higher than Ross's statements and squashed his attempts at drawing Israel and Syria to the negotiating table.

But deciding to keep the sanctions on Iraq the U.N. Security Council has ruled on extending the sufferings of the 18 million Iraqi people, said Al Aswaq daily. The council's decision not to allow Iraq to sell its oil to buy food and medicine for its people was unjust and ran contrary to Western claims that basic human rights ought to be safeguarded in various parts of the world. As the world prepares for the advent of the 21st century, the international community continues to witness injustice and human rights violations — all committed to satisfy the greed and the desires of

certain world powers, the paper said.

In another column in Al Dustour, Taher Al Adwan accused the United States of delaying the lifting of sanctions on Iraq until its oil companies have completed the looting of Arab oil in the Gulf states and storing the oil in American oil wells. The columnist said that the war on Iraq as well as the continuation of the sanctions on its people were motivated by the lust for oil. Washington is continually finding pretexts to delay the lifting of the embargo until Iraq succumbs to the desires of American oil firms and offers its oil on a silver platter, said the writer. He expressed hope that the Arab leaders would take the initiative and end the sanctions and refuse to comply to the wishes of the American oil firms.

A columnist in Al Dustour urged the government to adopt an austerity programme and curtail spending. Most of the debts were caused by the execution of non-developmental projects in Jordan, thus causing the Jordanians to bear the consequences and the country to face a state of economic and political instability, said Mohammad Daoud. The writer warned that there were clear signs for excessive consumption and public spending and that this would no doubt have a very negative effect on the country. Citing the government's tendency to continue the process of borrowing to finance projects, the writer said that borrowing should be confined only to areas where income-generating projects are contemplated.

LETTERS

Accord or discord?

To the Editor:

THE INFLUX into Jordan of 900 Israeli tourists a day, who presumably have no difficulty in obtaining Jordanian entry visas and who enjoy unrestricted freedom of movement during their stay in Jordan, led me to believe that Jordanians would naturally be accorded reciprocal treatment by Israel. I therefore applied through a licensed Jordanian travel office for Israeli visas for my wife and myself to visit close relatives in West Jerusalem who had invited us to spend the Easter holiday with them.

After the lapse of three weeks (no less) we were informed by the travel office that the Israeli authorities want to know the purpose and duration of our visit, where or with whom we would be staying, and (believe it or not!) a written undertaking that we would leave Israel at the end of our visit. We complied.

Ten days later (no less) we were informed by the travel office that the Israeli authorities want to know the name, the full address, the telephone number, and the business or work of the head of the family with whom we would be staying. We complied.

Five days later we received the final reply that our application for visas was rejected by the Israeli authorities on the flimsy excuse that "we do not qualify as tourists." It was then that I realised how mistaken I was in believing that after the conclusion of the Jordan/Israeli peace treaty we would be dealing with a different Israel, and that we were at the beginning of an era of peace the benefits of which would gradually seep through to the man on the street (that's me). My only consolation is that my gullibility in this situation is more than matched by that of Mr. Yasser Arafat in signing the Oslo Accord (or should I say "OSLO DISCORD") and his recent public declaration that he would "soon be praying at the Aqsa Mosque". The difference between Mr. Arafat's disillusionment and mine, is that I only have to face my wife for not being able to obtain an Israeli entry visa, whereas Mr. Arafat would eventually have to face four million Palestinians in the diaspora, if he can ever leave the Gaza Strip where he has been entrapped under the terms and conditions of his Oslo Accord.

Every tale should have a moral, and the moral of this sad tale is that:

"It is foolish to act on the assumption that a leopard would change its spots!"

Advocate George Kaware,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

هنا من النص

Petra papyrus scrolls, nearly all conserved, reveal late Byzantine social traditions in south Jordan

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

LESS THAN sixteen months after they were discovered in the collapsed remains of a Byzantine church at Petra, the important collection of burnt Petra papyrus scrolls has been almost totally conserved and protected by an international team of experts, and is well on the way to being read and analysed by scholars from several countries.

The papyri — the single largest collection of written material from ancient Jordan — are starting to clarify many aspects of social organisation and human traditions in mid-6th century AD Petra, especially related to wills, inheritance, and property ownership.

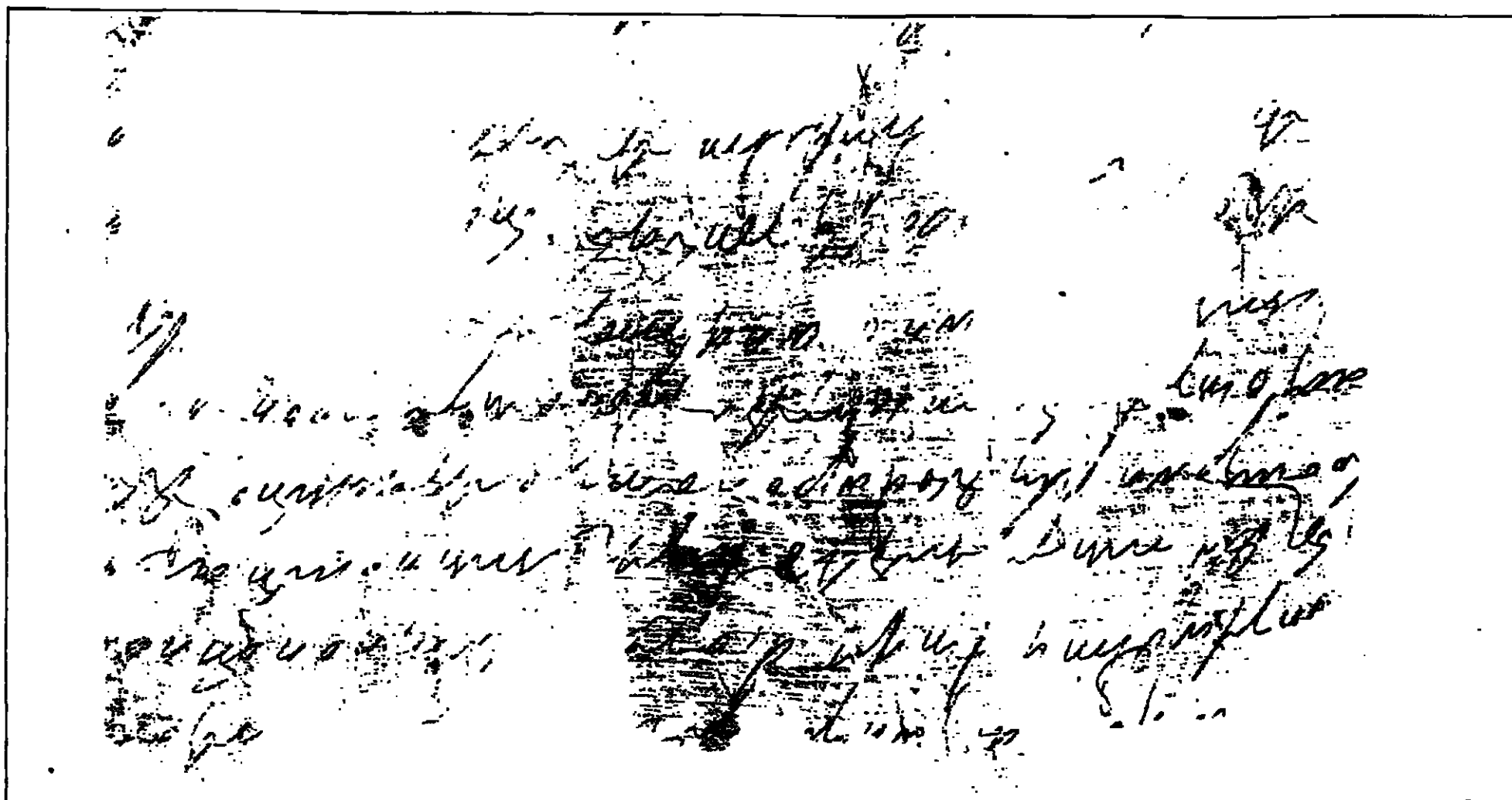
They are also clarifying the durability of Nabatean Arab culture, which continued to manifest itself in people's names nearly four and a half centuries after the Roman annexation of the Nabatean capital and heartland.

The work on the Petra Papyri, which has been led and coordinated by the American Centre of Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman, has been exemplary in three important ways: the speedy preservation of such rare ancient manuscripts, which could have been threatened with total disintegration due to their fragile state; the very generous policy of sharing information about the scrolls with other scholars through interviews, press releases and newsletters; and the international fundraising effort that ACOR undertook to raise approximately \$150,000 to date from private and public sources to finance the conservation work.

As such, the work on the Petra Papyri, as they are now popularly called, does not only shed new light on ancient aspects of Jordanian culture and its interaction with foreign lands; it also makes an emphatic statement about what can be achieved today through efficient collaborative efforts among private and public institutions in Jordan and other countries.

The conservation work that has been carried out at ACOR since September 1994 has revealed the existence of about 150 separate scrolls — more than double the original estimate when the cache was first discovered. This number will probably increase as the remaining few bundles of charred rolls are painstakingly separated and reconstructed this summer.

The sheer quantity of script in the scrolls is proving to be a treasure trove of information about life in Petra in the mid-6th century. Over 200 metres of 40-centimetre-wide scrolls have been unravelled to date, revealing documentary texts written by different scribes using a



Part of a Petra papyrus scroll written in a cursive script. The text is the will of a Petra resident named Obodianus who asks that his assets be used to feed and clothe his mother, and that after her death they should be given to a church and hospital at Petra (Photo by Henry Cowherd)

'The sheer quantity of script in the scrolls is proving to be a treasure trove of information about life in Petra in the mid-6th century'

combination of cursive and angular, formal scripts. The earliest date mentioned in the scrolls is 538 AD, and the latest is 559 AD — a period of Petra's history that is very poorly documented by excavations or literary evidence.

Dr. Zbigniew Fiema, the archaeologist who headed the excavation of the church and who now works on the analysis of the information derived from the scrolls and related to the reconstruction of historical context, told the Jordan Times in an interview in Amman that "probably the greatest value of these scrolls is the information they shed on the daily life, communal traditions, land transfers, and documentary transactions of the people mentioned in the scrolls — information that is not available from any other comparable source."

These are the only scrolls of their kind ever discovered in Jordan from this period; they are also thought to be the first example anywhere in the world of an archive of ancient papyrus scrolls that was recovered by systematic excavations, during which the place and context of the find were scientifically documented and recorded. The closest comparative material is a collection of papyrus scrolls from the vicinity of a church at Nessana in the Naqab

(Negev) desert to the west, dating from the 6th to the late 7th centuries AD. The Nessana scrolls, which were found intact, included texts on literary subjects (e.g. a Greek dictionary to Virgil's Aeneas), theology (fragments of the gospel of John), and non-literary texts related to all spheres of life, such as trade, financial contracts, marriage and divorce, wills, division of property, letters, sales receipts, and military affairs.

About half the Petra texts deal with wills and property inheritance, and over 50 individual names of people have been identified to date. These include a range of men identified by their ranks or titles, including both administrative and ecclesiastical titles (e.g., bishop, deacon, governor, collector of taxes). The texts are dotted with typical Byzantine religious titles of honour, such as very reverend, most pious, and Christ-loving, as well as honorary titles of laymen, such as most magnificent, most admirable (for men) and most decorous (for women).

Several traditional Nabatean names appear among the more common Christian and Roman (Latin) names. Examples of Greek names are Epiphanius and Kyriakos, and of Latin names Flavius Sabinius and Romanus. Two fragmentary signa-

tures in a language other than Greek (perhaps Semitic) suggest the continued use of non-Greco-Roman local scripts well into the Byzantine era. Names of towns, villages and areas around Petra seem to represent a Greek rendition of names in early Arabic, indicating the importance of early Arabic among local rural folk in the 6th century AD.

The largest scroll opened to date, over 8.5 metres long, is an inventory compiled in 538 AD by a public attorney, listing property owned by the church and by two deceased people named Diphilus (a typical Greek name) and Obodianus, a Hellenised version of the Nabatean name 'bd' (Abdai) and Obadas. The Hellenised name Dusharius also appears several times, clearly reflecting the name of the chief Nabatean male deity Dushara (or Dushara).

One scroll measuring over four metres long is the will of an ailing Obodianus, who directs that his property should pass on to the Church of Saint High Priest Aaron and to the Hospital of Saint Martyr [Cyrilus?], both of which are located in Petra. The apparently terminally ill Obodianus asks that after his death his heirs should keep his mother supplied with food and clothing for

the rest of her life.

A three-metre-long scroll is a sworn declaration related to a division of inherited property, including gardens, vineyards, agricultural land with threshing floors, water cisterns, houses and other assets, while another two-metre-long scroll dated 540/541 AD is an agreement for the sale of inherited property.

Several scrolls mention the names of settlements other than Petra, including Augustopolis (Udrub, ten kilometres to the east), an unidentified site called Eleutheropolis, and numerous villages, farmlands, threshing floors, water cisterns, roads and streams in the immediate vicinity of Petra. Some of these ancient names have survived until today, such as the name Dara, which ACOR Director Dr. Pierre Bikai has identified with an area near the modern rehouse, at the entrance of Petra, that still carries this name.

The information being obtained about early-to-mid-6th century Petra's people and rural hinterland will help to clarify many vague aspects of late Byzantine Petra's economic and social history, which in turn will fill in major blanks in the history of southern Jordan at that time.

Most of the texts have

only been quick initial readings, and only a handful have been read in full, so the full scholarly benefits to be derived from them must await the historical analysis of the scrolls that will be conducted in the coming five years. The scholarly analysis and publication will be done by two separate teams, headed by Professor Jaakko Froese, professor of papyrology at the Academy of Finland and professor at the University of Helsinki (Finland), and by Professor Ludwig Koenen of the University of Michigan (USA) and Clement Kuehn of Loyola University (Chicago, USA), with Dr. Fiema investigating the scrolls' wider historical significance. The teams have been given five years to publish the materials, with another three year grace period likely due to the large amount of information that must be reconstructed and studied.

The conservation work has been done by a Finnish team headed by Professor Froese, and including eight graduate and post-graduate students from the University of Helsinki and Ms. Fatma Mari from Yarmouk University. Henry Cowherd has photographed the scrolls.

The papyri were found in two archives in the Scroll Room, at the north-east

corner of the church's exterior. The major archive was in the north-west corner of the room, and the smaller archive was found on a collapsed stone shelf against the southern wall of the room.

Based on their location associated with the church and their references to people and properties, the scrolls seem to relate to a limited number of people, perhaps parishioners or benefactors of the church. There is no information that seems to relate to the city or the population as a whole. The scrolls were found in what appears to be a storage area, and not a library or office where they were written. One scroll was found lying open, perhaps because it was being read when the church collapsed and burned.

The scrolls seem to have been tightly wrapped in cloth, and were probably placed on wooden shelves or in wooden boxes, judging from the excavated remains of wood, straw, textiles, copper hinges, glass fragments, and small bronze chains. The glass may have been used to decorate inlaid wooden boxes.

The conservation work on the scrolls will finish this summer, after which the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and ACOR will have to tackle the issue of

their permanent storage and display. The papyri are safe now in the ACOR conservation lab, with its temperature and humidity controls that are vital to prevent deterioration or disintegration of the thin, carbonised scrolls. ACOR hopes to launch a fund-raising drive to build a permanent storage cabinet with appropriate environmental controls, in which the scrolls can be permanently stored when they are returned to the Department of Antiquities.

ACOR Director Pierre Bikai notes that one of the important principles that ACOR applies in all its archaeological research projects is the proper conservation and preservation of excavated sites and artifacts. ACOR, with financial assistance from USAID and other sources, is building a permanent shelter for the church where the scrolls were found, with its splendid floor mosaics, and its fully conserving the scrolls themselves for posterity.

Dr. Bikai notes that such archaeological projects serve Jordan in several related ways. They generate substantial international publicity for Jordan (over 50 press articles and ten films to date on the church project, including mention by Discover Magazine as one of the world's 75 top science stories in 1994); they provide income for local workers during the life of the project; and they train a growing team of Jordanian technicians in such important fields as conservation of mosaics and perishable artifacts.

The scrolls were excavated by conservator Catherine Valentour and Dr. Fiema, assisted by Deborah Koorring and Department of Antiquities Petra Inspector Suleiman Faraj. The excavation was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The scrolls conservation project has been sponsored and funded by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, ACOR, the University of Helsinki, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland, the Academy of Finland, and the University of Michigan, with other contributions made by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Samuel Kress Foundation, the United States Information Agency, Robert Johnston, R.D. Doidge, J. and J. Dumit, Yarmouk University, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Private contributions to the cost of fully conserving and permanently storing the scrolls can be made through ACOR or the Department of Antiquities, and individuals or institutions that make substantial contributions can "adopt" a scroll and have it named after them or any person of their choice. Ten scrolls have been named already in this fashion.

U.N. approves Iraq oil plan

(Continued from page 1)

No deadline has been set for the secretary-general's report and diplomats say the negotiations could take a month or more.

Out of each \$1 billion worth of oil sold, between \$650 million and \$680 million would be available to purchase humanitarian supplies. This includes \$130 million to \$150 million directly earmarked for a U.N. programme to assist the Kurds of northern Iraq, subjected to a government blockade.

Some \$300 million would be creamed off the top of each \$1 billion for a U.N. Gulf war reparations fund. The balance would meet other U.N. costs stemming from the war, such as scrapping Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and long-term monitoring to ensure they are not rebuilt.

If the scheme is renewed for another six months, potential annual oil sales of \$4 billion would compare with Iraq's pre-Gulf war revenues of up to \$18 billion. Exports then totalled more than three million barrels of oil a day, compared with some 600,000 barrels a day under the U.N. plan.

Most of the oil would have to be exported through a disused pipeline running from Kirkuk, in northern

Iraq, to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Yumurtalik. The rest could be shipped from Iraq's Gulf port of Mina Al Bakr.

To help Baghdad pay the Turkish pipeline tolls it would be allowed to sell an additional \$28 million of oil for every \$1 billion of oil contracted.

China and some non-aligned countries said telling Iraq how it could export its oil infringed on its sovereignty but nevertheless voted for the resolution.

The oil-for-goods scheme is more favourable to Iraq than one it rejected in 1991 permitting only \$1.6 billion in sales over six months. That required the oil to be shipped exclusively through the pipeline to Turkey and more intrusive monitoring of the distribution of food and other goods.

Unlike that take-it-or-leave-it scheme, spurned by Baghdad as an affront to its sovereignty, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz played an active role in helping negotiate the new resolution, with French, Russian, Argentine and other council members acting as intermediaries.

Following are highlights of the Security Council resolution:

— Iraq can sell \$1 billion worth of oil every 90 days or

\$2 billion over six months to meet humanitarian needs of its people. After 180 days the resolution has to be renewed.

— The \$1 billion sum can be raised by \$28 million to pay tariffs that Turkey may charge for the use of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline between the two countries.

— The resolution would take effect a day after a report from Secretary-General Ghali, whose staff has to negotiate monitoring plans and other arrangements with the Iraqi government. Such procedures take a minimum of a month.

— Oil sales proceeds available for Iraq's humanitarian supplies would be about \$650 million to \$680 million of each \$1 billion. A 30 per cent deduction, \$300 million, would be earmarked for a Gulf war reparations fund and another \$20 million to \$50 million would meet other U.N. costs.

— A sum of \$130 million to \$150 million every 90 days is to go for U.N. humanitarian

programmes for Kurds in the north.

— "The larger share" of oil is to be shipped through the pipeline to Turkey rather than Mina Al Bakr.

— Iraq will be permitted to import equipment needed to repair the pipeline to Turkey. It may finance these goods through letters of credit on future oil sales.

— Oil contracts need approval by the Security Council's Sanctions Committee to make sure prices are at "fair market value" and that letters of credit are paid to an Escrow account so that costs for compensation and U.N. expenses can be deducted.

— Revenues for the limited oil sales are precluded from legal proceedings and any claims against them.

— The resolution should not be a substitute for an eventual lifting of the full oil embargo. Nothing in the resolution "should be interpreted as infringing the sovereignty or territorial integrity of Iraq."

Rabin ready to remove colonies

(Continued from page 1)

the permanent arrangement, settlements are to be dismantled," Mr. Rabin said.

Mr. Rabin said the bombing campaign by Hamas and Islamic Jihad underscored the vulnerability of isolated Jewish settlements located in

Palestinian population centres.

He rejected claims by the opposition Likud Party that settlements increase Israeli security because they require the deployment of additional troops in the area.

"I think that these are mainly political settlements

that don't give an answer to terrorism," Mr. Rabin said, referring to settlements established under the former Likud government near Palestinian towns to strengthen Israel's grip on the land.

"They make the war against terrorism harder. I also would not have established Kfar Darom and Netzarim," he added, referring to the sites of the two latest bombings attacks.

Mr. Rabin said it was natural for support for his policies to drop in the wake of bombing attacks, but that he would continue the negotiations with the PLO.

But, he added, "I will not decide on policies according to a survey... as long as I am convinced that the direction in which we are going is the right one."

"If the peace process is halted, all the Palestinians will unite in a huge effort to carry out attacks."

"We are ready to try all the chances for peace, on condition that we have security at the end of the road," Mr. Rabin said.

Turning to Palestinian efforts to set up a state of their own, he said: "At this stage, I am against a Palestinian state."

"I would like to have had two states, Israel and Jordan, with the Palestinians between

them making up a separate entity but less than a state."

Mr. Rabin did not rule out the idea of a Palestinian state in Gaza and the self-rule enclave of Jericho on the West Bank. "Theoretically, if that was enough to settle the Palestinian question, we could think about it," he said.

However, "there is no chance for this proposal to be accepted by a Palestinian and certainly not by Yasser Arafat," the PLO chairman and head of the self-rule authority, he acknowledged.

An army general warned Friday that Israel may have to revise security arrangements with the Palestinian self-rule authority if militant attacks continue.

Mr. Arafat "does not respect the security accord" signed in May 1994 as part of the deal launching self-rule, said General Shaul Mofaz, military commander of southern Israel and the autonomous Gaza Strip.

"If he does not take measures which satisfy Israel we must reexamine this accord," the general told Haaretz.

"Until he (Arafat) seriously disarms the Islamists, pursues wanted offenders and outlaws terrorist groups, there will be no results on the ground," Gen. Mofaz said.

Arafat cool to Hamas truce

(Continued from page 1)

political leaders are in jail. The meeting came as Israel started a 10-day closure of the territories to head off any attacks during the Jewish Passover holiday.

The draft declaration calls for the release of all detainees held since the attack, an end to the crackdown and steps towards starting a dialogue between Hamas and the self-rule authority.

The communique called on all sides to pull back from the edge of open warfare in Gaza.

The truce was supposed to end two weeks of tension in the Gaza Strip, fuelled by the mysterious bombing death of a top Hamas guerrilla and suicide bombings that killed eight people near a Jewish settlement in Gaza last Sunday.

Attacks launched from or inside areas under Palestinian control have embarrassed Mr. Arafat and increased Israeli and U.S. pressure on him for a crackdown.

Thirty Hamas and Islamic Jihad followers were released from jail Friday, leaving about 140 in detention. There were no reports of new arrests.

Islamic Jihad, meanwhile, threatened to retaliate if more people were detained or tried before Mr. Arafat's

new military tribunal. Last week, two Islamic Jihad followers were sentenced by the secret court to 15 years and life in prison, respectively.

"Our fighters warn the authority against continuing its measures and affirm that they are prepared to respond," said an Islamic Jihad leaflet distributed Friday.

Islamic Jihad published what it said were the names of the three judges sitting on the military tribunal. Security officials had kept the names secret, apparently so the judges would not become targets of revenge attacks.

Palestinian police say at least 200 militants have been rounded up in the arrests following the two suicide bombings.

They said about 150 of the detainees were members of the military wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, but Hamas sources claimed the figure was inflated.

The meeting with Mr. Arafat was set up with the help of Haider Abdul Shafi, former chief negotiator with Israel.

"The deal basically is to avert internal conflict," Mr. Abdul Shafi said. "The important thing is that both Fateh and Hamas signed the draft, and Arafat has said he will study it very carefully."

Confidence is building up at Amman Financial Market

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prices slipped a little at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) and turnover remained largely steady last week amid signs that the stock exchange is regaining confidence after two months of stagnation, brokers said Friday.

The weekly AFM report said trading for the week ending Thursday was JD 19.7 million, down 9.6 per cent from the previous week's 21.8 million. But the figure was more than double the average weekly trading posted in the first three months of the year, the brokers noted. The general share price in-

dex based on 60 major companies closed for the week at 145.9 points after shedding 0.6 points or 0.4 per cent.

The separate sectoral indices showed that services and industrial sector shares lost an average of 3.3 per cent and 0.9 per cent respectively during the week, while commercial banks and insurance firms gained 0.2 per cent and 0.4 per cent.

Commercial banks accounted for 56.8 per cent of the weekly volume with a turnover of JD 11.2 million, followed by the services sector with JD 4.7 million (23.9 per cent), industrials with JD 3.5 million (17.8 per cent) and insurance stock with JD 300,000 (1.5 per cent), the

AFM report said.

Shares of 88 companies were traded during the week, when 6.5 million shares changed hands under 6,270 deals. Stocks of 29 of the firms closed the week with gains, while 40 lost and 19 remained stable.

Brokers said bulk transfers of shares among institutions were largely behind the higher volume of business during the week. Over a million shares worth JD 5.8 million of the Jordan National Bank changed hands during the week, including a bulk deal involving 800,000 of the stocks between two institutions, they noted.

They said investor interest remained close on the ser-

vices sector for the second week running after Jordan and Israel signed an agreement on cooperation on tourism in early April.

In general, the brokers said, moves by the government to prompt state agencies to intervene in the market to prop up the prices were working well. The general price index had dipped below the 140-point mark in late March but institutional buying put stock prices back on track, they said.

"The wheels are now moving in the market after the institutional injection of funds made up for some of the money that disappeared

(Continued on page 9)

Japan rate cut, economic package fail to excite markets

TOKYO (R) — Japan's central bank Friday cut its key lending rate to a historic low of one per cent in hopes of giving added force to the government's attempt to tackle the strong yen with a new package of economic measures.

But the twin efforts failed to fire up either currency or share markets, and some economists said the dollar could challenge new global lows in the not-too-distant future.

The Bank of Japan cut its discount rate by 0.75 percentage point to one per cent, effective Friday.

The long-awaited move came just hours after the government approved a package of emergency economic measures to counter the yen's rise of more than 20 per cent against the dollar this year — a surge which has threatened Japan's economic recovery and battered its feeble stock market.

Many financial market players said they were dis-

appointed with the package, in which the government pledged to try to cut Japan's huge current account surplus, speed up deregulation, boost imports, stimulate the economy and revitalise markets.

But government bureaucrats scuttled politicians' efforts to set a target for cutting the surplus, one step that market players said might have signalled Tokyo was serious about tackling root causes of the yen's rise.

"It's just one more," said Jeff Young, an analyst at Salomon Brothers Asia. "On the fiscal side there is nothing really there and on the deregulation side, nothing new."

In a sign of the problems still to be addressed, the finance ministry said later that Japan's trade surplus with the United States widened to \$55.66 billion in fiscal 1994/95, which ended on March 31, from \$51.12 billion in 1993/94.

Japan's total 1994/95 sur-

plus, however, posted its first drop in four years, dipping 3.2 per cent to \$117.98 billion.

Some economists were encouraged by a government decision to clear the way for the issue of bonds that are not linked to a specific public works project, a step ordinarily anathema to tight-fisted finance ministry officials.

"There was a change in fiscal principle, that is the biggest factor (in the package)," said Susumu Kato, chief economist at C.S. First Boston (Japan) Ltd.

The package included a pledge to work for speedy passage of an extra budget, and to include in it steps to cope with the yen's rise as well as funding for rebuilding after the January earthquake. But it did not specify the budget's size.

The package plus rate cut failed to cheer the Tokyo stock market, and the nikkei share average closed down

390.90 points, or 2.38 per cent, at 16,047.89.

Japanese government bond futures surged to end at a 15-month high and cash bond prices rose after the discount rate cut triggered sharp falls in short-term money rates.

The currency market, however, turned a cold shoulder to the economic steps and the dollar was little changed in afternoon trade at around 83.65 yen. Dealers were divided about prospects for the dollar, with some betting it may have touched bottom and others bracing for further falls.

Contentious U.S.-Japan talks on trade in cars and car parts, in which Washington is threatening sanctions, could also weigh down the dollar. "The dollar will remain under pressure because the structural dollar surplus on global markets is still in place," said Industrial Bank of Japan senior manager Yasuhiko Matsunaga.

Russia, Greece and Bulgaria to speed up oil pipeline plan

VOULIAGMENI, Greece (R) — Russia, Greece and Bulgaria agreed Friday to speed up construction of a \$700 million pipeline to bring Russian crude oil from the Urals to the northern Greek port of Alexandroupolis.

The 300-kilometre pipeline from the Bulgarian Black Sea port of Burgas will help bring Russian crude closer to Western markets by avoiding loading at the Russian port of Novorossiysk and transiting through the Bosphorus.

"We confirmed the inten-

tions of the three governments to speed up procedures for the pipeline project," said Greek Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias. "Very soon we will have a meeting of experts from the three sides in Moscow and the signing of a protocol agreement," he told reporters.

He was speaking after talks with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and Bulgarian Foreign Minister Georgi Pirinski on the sidelines of a meeting of the 11-member Black Sea Econo-

mic Cooperation (BSEC) group.

The pipeline is expected to boost Greek shipping and the Bulgarian economy, and ease Russian concerns about tough new Turkish maritime rules for oil tankers passing through the Bosphorus.

The plan calls for the underground pipeline with a daily capacity of 600,000 barrels to be complete in 1997. It calls for marine facilities 20 kilometres south of Burgas for unloading tankers and a tank farm with a capacity of

3.8 million barrels. It also provides for a tank farm with a capacity of 7.5 million barrels near Alexandroupolis.

The project is expected to be designed, constructed and operated by a new international company to be set up and registered in Luxembourg, Trans-Balkan Pipeline, S.A.

Among the companies involved are the Russian oil and gas supply company Gazprom, the Greek Laris Group and Kopelouzos Group, and Prometheus Gas,

Iraqi commodity imports rise via Aqaba

AMMAN (R) — Iraq's state imports of basic commodities via Jordan's Red Sea port of Aqaba rose sharply in the first quarter of 1995 from the same period last year, according to figures released Friday.

The figures, obtained by Reuters from T. Gargour Shipping Agents, showed Iraq's state purchases of four basic commodities on chartered vessels rose 169 per cent from January to March compared to 86,908 tonnes in the same period in 1994.

Gargour said imports via containers in January and

A sharp rise in wheat imports, from 143,050 tonnes in the first quarter of 1995 from none in the same period 1994, is behind the rise in total imports of vegetable oil, sugar, rice and wheat.

Bagged rice imports rose to 36,065 tonnes from 10,025 tonnes in the same period last year. However, sugar purchases fell to 54,684 tonnes from 66,485 tonnes. No vegetable oil was imported against 10,399 tonnes in first quarter 1994.

Gargour said imports via

February 1995 stood at 3,927 tonnes and 2,742 tonnes respectively compared with 2,131 tonnes and 867 tonnes in the same period last year.

The rise reflects increased trade via private Jordanian traders, said Gargour which handled 32.56 per cent of Iraq's total chartered tonnage via Aqaba last year.

Traders say Iraq's state imports were severely curtailed in 1994 due to a worsening hard currency crisis as a result of a U.N. trade embargo imposed after Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait.

Its purchases of commodities on chartered vessels via Jordan's Red Sea port of Aqaba fell by 75 per cent in 1994 to 313,111 tonnes from 1,265,281 tonnes in 1993.

There is also some unspecified tonnage in reexports to Iraq, mostly container goods imported by Jordanian traders to the Aqaba free zone area that are sold to private Iraqi traders.

Sales of basic commodities to Iraq, while not banned, require a special licence from the U.N. sanctions committee.

Arab development aid tops \$1b in '94

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Arab League's five main financial institutions provided more than \$1 billion in aid to member states in 1994, bringing their total operations to around \$26 billion, an official report said Friday.

Around \$660 million were extended by the Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) while \$255 million were provided by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) in Abu Dhabi, according to the official Emirates news agency WAM, which quoted annual reports by those funds.

AFESD loans and technical assistance benefitted Egypt, Syria and seven other Arab nations and covered communication, energy, elec-

tricity, water, roads, sewage, industry, mining, agriculture and rural development.

The AMF gave four loans to Algeria and three other members in 1994 to finance economic reforms and tackle balance of payments deficits.

Around \$75 million were provided by the Khartoum-based Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa and \$24 million by the Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development, also based in the Sudanese capital.

The remaining institution, the Kuwaiti-based Arab Corporation for Investment Guarantee extended credits worth around \$30 million to finance exports and guaran-

tee investment in 13 Arab countries.

The total aid provided by the five funds reached nearly \$26 billion and their capital exceeded \$10 billion, according to the annual reports, which were approved by the Arab finance ministers in Muscat this week.

The five institutions were created in early 1970s to finance development in the Arab League's 22 members through extending soft loans and technical assistance. Most members are subscribers to their capital but the bulk of the contributions came from Gulf states and other Arab oil producers.

Another institution, the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Trade Financing Programme

(ATFP), was established four years ago as an offshoot of the AMF.

Its activities include financing flagging trade among member states and it has been involved in setting up an advanced data network to distribute information to Arab producers on regional markets. The fund has a capital of \$500 million and its credits have reached nearly \$394 million.

The annual reports did not include assistance extended by governments in oil-rich members or funds owned by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE and Iraq. Official figures showed such combined aid have totalled around \$100 billion.

China tackles software piracy at state agencies

BEIJING (R) — China Friday began a drive to purge state agencies of illegally copied software, tackling an embarrassing problem that U.S. publishers allege costs them millions of dollars in lost sales.

In a carrot-and-stick campaign, the government has begun allocating more money for software while the State Copyright Administration vowed to prosecute anyone who makes illegal software copies — whether in the private or state sector.

"If we find a case with enough evidence," whether the violation was done by a government office, a state-run enterprise or the private sector, the person will be punished to the full extent of the law," copyright official Wang Hongping was quoted by Xinhua news agency as saying.

The copyright administration issued an edict Friday urging all computer users to buy their software instead of copying it, the state-run news agency said.

It also suggested computer users buy their software from reputable companies to avoid purchasing illegal copies inadvertently from high-quality counterfeiters.

The copyright agency Thursday announced plans for a nationwide crackdown

on bootleg software, especially that manufactured for sale by pirate companies.

State Councillor Li Tiejing, addressing a national anti-piracy meeting, said the war on counterfeiters had seen some successes but that a protracted struggle was needed.

"Intellectual property protection is a long and complicated task that is arduous and urgent," Mr. Li said.

The United States and China signed a major accord in March mandating tough enforcement against intellectual property piracy in China, particularly illegal music recordings and movies on compact and laser disc and counterfeit software.

The resulting enforcement has begun to take effect. Pirate music CDs have dried up in many street markets, although discs called CD-roms crammed with up-to-the-minute U.S. software titles worth thousands of dollars still are sold discreetly in many bustling technology bazaars.

The Business Software Alliance, an anti-piracy consortium of major U.S. makers, has alleged that despite the risks some government agencies and state enterprises rely heavily on illegal copied software.

In one well-documented

case, a major state-run steel mill ground to a halt for several days at a cost of millions of dollars after bootleg software used to run it crashed.

The edict against software copying and allocation of what Xinhua called "large sums" of state money to

assure agencies they can afford software should placate critics who say some computer departments scoff at spending money on software.

It could also invigorate China's own software industry.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY APRIL 15, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Contact those friends who show originality and gain much from them: Make tonight a happy one at home with your loved ones.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Enthusiasm for your chosen career can make it more efficient today and you gain greater benefits from it.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Study into current trends which can help you to achieve a greater success today. Become more open-minded to current events.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Find better methods through which you can improve your business affairs today, such as computer and the like.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) It would be well to confer with lesser conservative persons which could prove to be both understanding and profitable.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Find the mechanisms which can make your tasks lighter and also save you hours of time in the process today.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) This is ideal today and tonight to get into new kinds of entertainment which may please you very much and be quite profitable.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Something rather serious may happen at home today, but take it in your stride, since conditions there will improve.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is a good day to communicate well with others and get the right results. Make new contacts of worth even if it takes effort.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Study into more up-to-date systems and ideas which are best for improving your property and holdings.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have fine talents and can put them across admirably to others today. Then tonight be with persons who are lots of fun.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you do any studying today, it can be of modern ways so that you can get out of that old-fashioned rut.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

THE Daily Crossword by Melvin Karmovsky

ACROSS

- 1 Theme
- 2 Moroccan city
- 3 Short go
- 4 Worship
- 5 Degraded
- 6 Small amount
- 7 Money bag
- 8 K
- 9 Involve
- 10 Conductor
- 11 Georg
- 12 Temple, old
- 13 style
- 14 Actor Brian
- 15 Holm oak
- 16 Can. prov.
- 17 Fins
- 18 "— of Two Cities"
- 19 Immediately after this
- 20 Waltzing —
- 21 The with edible berries
- 22 Progress
- 23 Stage direction
- 24 Fast driver
- 25 Cereal grain
- 26 Movie dog
- 27 Groove
- 28 Times of day
- 29 ably
- 30 Smart
- 31 "The — Game"
- 32 Letter
- 33 N.Y. county
- 34 House addition
- 35 French river
- 36 Did a cobbler's job
- 37 Bom
- 38 Brought under control
- 39 Mountain chain
- 40 Down
- 41 Salsa
- 42 Ham room
- 43 Monarch
- 44 Peace goddess
- 45 Prehistoric tool
- 46 Fencing sword
- 47 Delivery
- 48 Cudgel
- 49 — (usually)
- 50 Hardy heroine
- 51 Revolver's first
- 52 Fry
- 53 Blend
- 54 ably
- 55 Alias letters
- 56 "The — Game"
- 57 Doral
- 58 Whitmore ad-4
- 59 film
- 60 Wife of Zeus
- 61 Makes a score in pinhole
- 62 Holiday feast
- 63 Cover
- 64 Decorative vase
- 65 Reward at
- 66 rainbow's end?
- 67 — a
- 68 Phoenician
- 69 Pickpocket
- 70 Peace goddess
- 71 Prehistoric tool
- 72 Calbed
- 73 Corrode
- 74 Quaker?
- 75 Moby's lur place
- 76 Descriptive heading
- 77 Bay — Langdon
- 78 Charged particle
- 79 insect
- 80 "— boy"
- 81 Andalusian aunt
- 82 Dactyl
- 83 — what?
- 84 Commercial

Puzzle solved:

ACROSS: 1. THEME, 2. MORRIS, 3. SHORT, 4. WORSHIP, 5. DEGRADE, 6. SMALL, 7. MONEY, 8. K, 9. INVOLVE, 10. CONDUCTOR, 11. GEORG, 12. TEMPLE, 13. STYLE, 14. ACTOR, 15. HOLM, 16. CAN., 17. FINS, 18. K, 19. INVOLVE, 20. CONDUCTOR, 21. GEORG, 22. TEMPLE, 23. STYLE, 24. ACTOR, 25. HOLM, 26. CAN., 27. FINS, 28. K, 29. INVOLVE, 30. CONDUCTOR, 31. GEORG, 32. TEMPLE, 33. STYLE, 34. ACTOR, 35. HOLM, 36. CAN., 37. FINS, 38. K, 39. INVOLVE, 40. CONDUCTOR, 41. GEORG, 42. TEMPLE, 43. STYLE, 44. ACTOR, 45. HOLM, 46. CAN., 47. FINS, 48. K, 49. INVOLVE, 50. CONDUCTOR, 51. GEORG, 52. TEMPLE, 53. STYLE, 54. ACTOR, 55. HOLM, 56. CAN., 57. FINS, 58. K, 59. INVOLVE, 60. CONDUCTOR, 61. GEORG, 62. TEMPLE, 63. STYLE, 64. ACTOR, 65. HOLM, 66. CAN., 67. FINS, 68. K, 69. INVOLVE, 70. CONDUCTOR, 71. GEORG, 72. TEMPLE, 73. STYLE, 74. ACTOR, 75. HOLM, 76. CAN., 77. FINS, 78. K, 79. INVOLVE, 80. CONDUCTOR, 81. GEORG, 82. TEMPLE, 83. STYLE, 84. ACTOR, 85. HOLM, 86. CAN., 87. FINS, 88. K, 89. INVOLVE, 90. CONDUCTOR, 91. 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Aqaba

Its purchases of Jordan's Red Sea port Aqaba fell by 75 per cent in 1994 to 313,111 tonnes. There is also some concern in Iraq, mostly over the area that is sold to Iraq traders. Sales of basic commodities to Iraq, while not requiring a special license, are still under the UN sanctions.

1b in '94

AMF was established in 1994 as an independent body to regulate the securities market. Its activities include: monitoring the market, providing information to investors, and ensuring the integrity of the market. The AMF has been successful in its efforts to improve the market's performance and attract foreign investment.

te agencies

OSCOPE

STURDAY APRIL 15

major Jordanian banks

Shades of green

1. The Jordanian market

2. The Jordanian market

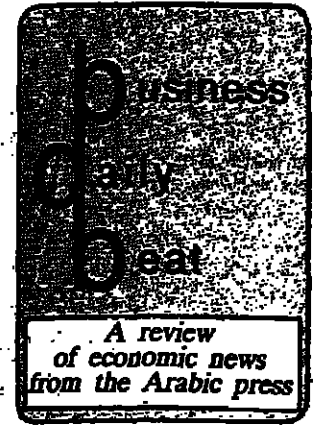
3. The Jordanian market

4. The Jordanian market

5. The Jordanian market

6. The Jordanian market

7. The Jordanian market



Row erupts over new produce stores

★ MUNICIPALITY of Greater Amman (MoGA) Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi is determined not to back down in the face of opposition from middlemen and traders of agricultural products who refuse to move to the new central vegetable market in Juweidah, behind the grain silos. Dr. Abbadi said the MoGA offered the middlemen a 50 per cent discount of the key money bids, if accepted, for the new stores but the traders and the middlemen want the stores free of charge as compensation for leaving the stores at the current market in Wihdat. They also want the rent to remain unchanged. Dr. Abbadi counters that it is illogical to provide the traders with stores more than four times as large as their current ones at no cost. Current stores are 40 square metres whereas the new ones are 180 square metres. "They have their stand and we have ours, and we shall remain firm on this subject," Dr. Abbadi said, adding that the traders and middlemen refuse to move to the new market because they want to continue monopolising the business and prevent others from competing with them. "By standing firm we shall break this monopoly," the mayor stressed. However, only 25 bids for the new stores were submitted by MoGA and only 16 were found to be legal and in order. Some 70 middlemen and traders who won stores at the current market refused to bid. The MoGA was offering 124 stores for open bidding. The new market, which cost JD 10 million to build and which has a capacity of 220 stores, will meet the needs of Amman until the year 2030 (Al Dustour).

★ THE COST of a telephone call between two cellular phones has been fixed at 185 fils per minute while the cost from a portable cellular phone to an ordinary phone or vice versa has been fixed at 245 fils per minute. According to a top official at the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) the charges will be reviewed after one year. The official pointed out that the fees and the charges had been fixed at the highest range for one year according to the agreement signed between the corporation and Fastlink, the company it contracted to operate the portable cellular network. TCC Director-General Walid Dweik says these charges are acceptable, noting that subscribers to this service should be capable of payment (Al Rai).

★ THE ARAB Potash Company generated JD 24.4 million in net profits last year, 10.4 per cent higher than 1993. The company produced 1,055,259 tonnes of potash, 13 per cent over 1993, and sold 1,516,652 tonnes, 2.7 per cent over 1993. The Arab Potash Company has awarded an industrial and table salt project to an Italian consortium at a cost of \$20 million and it is expected that trial production would begin in April 1996. The Salt plants will have a capacity to produce 1.2 million tonnes of table salt (Al Rai).

★ AL NISIR Al Arabi Insurance Company collected a total of JD 2.27 million in premiums last year, five per cent higher than the amount earned in 1993. The company paid claims of JD 1.97 million. The annual report shows that the company's investments totalled JD 4.2 million last year compared to JD 3.22 million at the end of 1993. Reserves reached JD 3.33 million, six per cent above the figure of 1993. The board of directors is recommending to the general assembly the distribution of JD 200,000 in dividends at a rate of 20 per cent (Al Aswaj).

Confidence is building up at Amman Financial Market

(Continued from page 8)

from the floor to commercial bank deposits," said a broker, who, understanding market guidelines, cannot be identified.

"Not all the money has come back to the market, but there are good signs that things are moving in the right direction," added the broker. At the same time, many investors have become more selective and are "concentrating on certain companies in the market, particularly commercial banks which can raise capital without turning to AFM funds," said the broker.

All Jordanian commercial banks are under a Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) directive to raise their capital to JD 20 million before the end of 1996.

While some banks may have opt for mergers or to turn to the market for the extra funds, many others have enough reserves for capitalisation without taxing the liquidity available at the stock exchange.

CBJ Governor Mohammad Nabulsi said last week that the central bank had no objections to banks capitalising their reserves to meet the capital requirement.

The governor also said local banks were also free to enter partnerships with foreign banks to raise their capital.

In any case, he said, "we will not be insensitive to the needs of the market... we will not push all the banks into the market at the same time."

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI				
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170				
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (08/04/1995 - 12/04/1995)				
WEEKLY REPORT				
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JD PRICE				
ARAB BANK PLC				
626,495	196.000	196.000	191.750	
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	5,876,111	4.640	4.640	4.890
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	892,938	4.530	4.530	4.750
BANK OF JORDAN	2,970	3.400	3.400	3.550
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	122,901	1.450	1.450	1.600
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	54,445	2.680	2.680	2.780
THE HOUSING BANK	1,753,472	6.270	6.270	7.580
JORDAN KUMAIT BANK	31,132	2.920	2.920	2.920
JORDAN GULF BANK	142,482	1.450	1.450	1.370
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	44,860	3.380	3.380	3.500
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	188,822	3.920	3.920	3.820
UNION BANK FOR SAVINGS & INVESTMENT	10,497	4.800	4.800	4.800
BUSINESS BANK	43,638	3.580	3.580	3.520
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	50,031	3.720	3.720	3.720
BEIT ELNAH SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	16,470	3.150	3.150	3.100
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	522,592	1.250	1.250	1.230
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	2,056	4.100	4.100	4.000
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	824,917	1.530	1.530	1.770
BANKS SECTOR				
11206828		INDEX NUMBER: 166.30		
CHANGE		+0.21%		
JORDAN INSURANCE	3,250	3.200	3.200	3.250
UNITED INSURANCE	5,565	2.650	2.650	2.650
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	925	1.850	1.850	1.850
GENERAL ARABIA INSURANCE	10,440	3.600	3.600	3.600
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	247,480	2.730	2.730	2.790
WOLFF LAND INSURANCE	4,391	2.600	2.600	2.600
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	5,200	2.600	2.600	2.600
THE NATIONAL ARABIA INSURANCE	28,842	3.150	3.150	3.100
DELTA INSURANCE	1,200	2.320	2.320	2.400
AL-NISIR AL-ARABI INSURANCE	7,420	4.750	4.750	4.600
INSURANCE SECTOR				
314713		INDEX NUMBER: 136.21		
CHANGE		+0.35%		
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	72,791	1.660	1.660	1.650
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	175,453	1.560	1.560	1.550
JORDAN HOTEL & TOURISM	1,437,998	7.300	7.300	7.200
IRBID DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	951	0.940	0.940	1.040
VEHICLES OWNERS FEDERATION	57,209	6.650	6.650	6.800
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	349,350	7.760	7.760	7.150
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS / NEW	142,127	7.470	7.470	7.000
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	55,729	3.010	3.010	2.960
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	28,401	2.380	2.380	2.260
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	114,604	1.700	1.700	1.600
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	1,850	1.060	1.060	1.010
MACHINERY EQUIP. REPAIRING & MAINTENANCE	5,478	0.690	0.690	0.660
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALRAI	6,721	10.400	10.400	10.250
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	1,235,979	2.700	2.700	2.730
ARAB JENTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	57,839	3.350	3.350	3.350
JORDANIAN EXPATRIATES INVESTMENT HOLDING	30,241	1.310	1.310	1.250
SERVICES SECTOR				
3772719		INDEX NUMBER: 140.98		
CHANGE		+0.25%		
ATTANKEEP CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	1,849	1.190	1.190	1.120
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	351,851	3.070	3.070	3.080
JORDAN PROSPERITY MINES				
	4,885	2.610	2.610	2.550
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW				
	8,805	4.650	4.650	4.850
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY				
	32,305	9.430	9.430	9.380
JORDAN ZANNING				
	3,965	7.550	7.550	7.930
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL				
	33,585	3.700	3.700	3.600
THE JORDAN WORSTED MILLS				
	186,758	8.560	8.560	8.200
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING				
	371,442	4.090	4.090	4.020
JORDAN DAIRY				
	16,495	2.400	2.400	2.460
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING				
	14,866	2.700	2.700	2.700
THE PUBLIC MINING				
	3,146	2.850	2.850	2.850
ARAB CHEMICAL DETERGENTS INDUSTRIES				
	7,138	14.830	14.830	14.650
SPINNING & WEAVING				
	27,495	2.600	2.600	2.670
RAPIA INDUSTRIES				
	3,871	2.510	2.510	2.480
DAR AL DAWA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT				
	52,542	7.950	7.950	7.950
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
	237,430	0.950	0.950	0.930
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY				
	76,490	7.150	7.150	7.250
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY				
	68,516	0.690	0.690	0.670
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING				
	559,475	1.550	1.550	1.570
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY				
	35,017	3.350	3.350	3.100
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES				
	100,768	2.430	2.430	2.530
JORDAN ROCKWOL INDUSTRIES				
	97,381	1.200	1.200	1.190
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES				
	169,353	4.200	4.200	4.200
ALADDIN INDUSTRIES				
	187,050	4.460	4.460	4.350
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JINCO				
	2,817	0.700	0.700	0.670
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING				
	25,070	4.700	4.700	4.700
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS				
	27,164	1.810	1.810	1.610
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS				
	21,062	2.240	2.240	2.280
KAWHER INVESTMENT				
	79	1.580	1.580	1.580
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES				
	30,682	3.500	3.500	3.460
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.				
	39,775	2.070	2.070	1.990
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR				
2799439		INDEX NUMBER: 120.87		
CHANGE		+0.87%		
GRAND TOTAL				
18093700		INDEX NUMBER: 145.85		
CHANGE		+0.87%		
PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (08/04/1995 - 12/04/1995)				
WEEKLY REPORT				
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JD PRICE				
ARAB CONTRACTORS				
	5,000	1.000	1.000	1.000
CENTRAL GENERAL TRADING & STORAGE				
	14,423	0.900	0.900	0.910
JORDAN TRADE FACILITIES				
	32,275	0.770	0.770	0.770
ZAKIA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY				
	20,079	1.490	1.490	1.390
UNITED CO. FOR ORGANIZING LAND TRANS.				
	72,312	2.210	2.210	2.240
ARAB YIN INV.CO.				
	744,692	1.130	1.130	1.130
ARAB FOOD & MEDICAL APPLIANCES				
	25,286	1.020	1.020	1.020
NATIONAL CHLORINE INDUSTRIES CO.LTD				
	272,674	1.610	1.610	1.650
NATIONAL TEXTILE & PLASTICS IND. CO.				
	7,098	1.120	1.120	1.080
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY				
	8,529	1.660	1.660	1.730
EL-SAY READY WEAR MANUFACTURING CO.				
	46,851	2.280	2.280	2.260
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES				
	309,043	1.570	1.570	1.560
UNIVERSAL METALS				
	38,323	1.530	1.530	1.650
UNION CHEMICAL & VEGETARIAN OIL INDUSTRY				
	3,444	2.450	2.450	2.500
JORDAN STEEL				
	24,205	0.990	0.990	0.990
ARAB ELECTRIC INDUSTRIES				
	1,850	0.930	0.930	0.910
GRAND TOTAL				
1636081				

Countdown begins for Jordan International Rally

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The countdown has already begun for one of the Kingdom's most prestigious sporting events — the Jordan International Rally — which this season marks its 13th year and is expected to witness some fundamental changes in its format.

At a press conference Thursday held at rally headquarters, the Forte Grand Hotel, rally organisers the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ) announced the event would this year be held Thursday the 18th and Friday the 19th of May with a varied group of entries from around the world.

The Jordan International Rally forms the second of the seven-round 1995 Middle East Rally Championship, one of four world regional championships held annually and sanctioned by FIA, the International Motor Sports Federation.

Khalifa Al Muteiri, who finished second in the '94 Jordan Rally behind Mohammad Bin Sulayem, won the first event of the season when he clinched the UAE rally title in his

Toyota Celica. The five other events after the Jordan Rally are:

- Rally du Liban, July 7-9
- Qatar International Rally, Sept. 14-15
- Kuwait International Rally, Oct. 5-6
- Oman International Rally, Nov. 2-3
- Dubai International Rally, Nov. 30-Dec. 1

The two-day Jordan International Rally will cover 868 kilometres with a total 326 kilometres of special stages. The most notable change in the event this year is the cancellation of the asphalt stages which were usually run on the first day in the scenic northern part of the Kingdom.

While foreign and local competitors alike favoured the asphalt stages they provided a distinct characteristic of the Jordan Rally, the organisers explained that due to considerable problems in the last two years in some villages around Jerash and Ajloun where some fans disrupted some stages by throwing rocks at cars or rally marshals, the 1995 Jordan Rally will have a new route for the first day which avoids all areas of population and agricultural development.



Five-time and 1994 Jordan Rally titleholder Mohammad Bin Sulayem in his UAE Armed Forces Ford Escort RS Cosworth (file photo)

"To ensure that the rally runs smoothly, we've decided to reroute the first day. Therefore the entire route will be on desert tracks," RACJ Director of Queen Alia International Airport with a regrouping half at Alia Gateway Hotel.

The timing and start of the rally have also undergone some changes.

The rally will start at noon from the King Abdullah Gardens in Shmeisani and finish at the Forte Grand in Amman at 6 p.m. The first day will cover 241 kilometres, including 82 kilometres of special stages.

The second day begins

early at 7 a.m. for a gruelling 617-kilometre drive including 243 kilometres of special stages that will take competitors as far as the rose red city of Petra for the regrouping halt.

The rally will finish at 6 p.m. at the Forte Grand in Amman.

During the press conference, Mr. Ledger expressed his appreciation to "all those who work very hard to make the event a success" especially rally organisers who are all volunteers and begin preparations months in advance. Mr. Ledger also expressed gratitude to R.J. Reynolds

Tobacco International who have been sponsoring the event for the second consecutive year under the brand name of Camel which is now being manufactured in Jordan by the Jordan Tobacco and Cigarette Company.

Other sponsors include Royal Jordanian, the Forte Grand in addition to invaluable assistance from the Public Security, the Civil Defence, and a host of government ministries, departments, companies and individuals.

Since the Jordan Rally has become well-known to drivers and motor sports officials as "probably the best in the Middle East," FIA President Max Mosley will be attending the event together with the FIA rally commission chairman.

At least one competitor will come from as far away as Australia. Other entries are expected from Great Britain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Egypt, Kenya, Kuwait, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Lebanon, the Czech Republic and Turkey.

Mr. Ledger told reporters that "for the first time Jordanian drivers had a realistic chance of winning as they are now better prepared and had more experience."

The Kingdom's reigning champion Bashar Bustami, who finished fourth overall last year, will be heading the field of top local competitors as the rally is only open to cars that comply with FIA regulations. It is anticipated that more than 25 foreign and 15 local crews will contest the event.

Jordan off to bad start in Davis Cup

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan's Davis Cup team got off to a bad start and have practically lost their chance of being promoted to the Asia/Oceania Zone Group 2 next year after losing their first two ties against Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia 3-0 in the tournament currently under way in Dubai.

Jordan's Group B also includes the United Arab Emirates, Pacific Oceania, and Lebanon.

The round robin competition is being played on a daily two singles and one doubles match format over five days with only the top team in the group being promoted to Group 2 whose winner is promoted to Group 1 before joining the prestigious World Group which includes teams such as the United States, Germany, Sweden and others.

In the opening matches against Bangladesh, team veteran Imad Abu Hamda lost to Hira Lal 6-4, 6-1. Later Faris Azzouni lost 6-3, 6-2 to Shovon Jamaly. Abu Hamda and promising 15-year-old Khalid Nafa' lost the doubles match 3-6, 7-5, 6-1.

On the second day, Jordan's team again lost 3-0 as Saudi Arabia's Bader Mohammad beat Abu Hamda 6-3, 4-6 in a three-hour-long match in soaring 42 degree heat which greatly affected the players' performance. Othman Anazi beat Faris Azzouni 6-2, 6-2 in the second singles match. Khalid Al Hussein and Faris Azzouni teamed up for the doubles match which they lost 6-2, 6-4.

Jordan's only hope of returning to Group 2 from which they were relegated after the 1993 competition was in topping the five-team group.

The Asia/Oceania Zone Group 3 tournament in Dubai is one of the largest in Davis Cup competition as 13 teams will be playing 108 matches at one single venue. Singapore now lead Group A which includes Kuwait, Bahrain, Syria, Oman, Kazakhstan and Brunei.

Singapore topped the standings after scoring their third win over Oman 3-0. In other matches, Kuwait beat Syria 3-0 and Brunei beat Oman 2-1.

Pacific Oceania topped Group B after a 2-1 win over Lebanon, while Bangladesh beat the UAE 3-0.

Jordan's team has had to rely on a young, relatively inexperienced line-up after the country's champion Hani Al Ali quit the game in 1993. All-time rival Abu Hamda was crowned Jordan's champion in 1993 but last year missed competition as he was preoccupied with studies in his final year at the faculty of medicine at the University of Jordan.

Abu Hamda, is possibly playing his last Davis Cup as he will leave for the U.S. soon to pursue his medical career. Azzouni, has played Davis Cup before and is one of the country's best players. However, Hussein, who attends university in the U.S. just recently joined the team, and Nafa' are playing their first Davis Cup and lack competitive match experience.

While team members had expressed optimism before the tournament they undoubtedly lack recent competitive match experience that would have put them in the mood for competition, and displayed any flaws in their training and tactics before the actual competition. This has been a constant yet unfulfilled demand of the Kingdom's tennis team.

Jordan Rally record

1981 Michel Saleh/Lebanon	Toyota Celica GT
1982 Michel Saleh/Lebanon	Toyota Celica GT
1983 Saeed Al Hajri/Qatar	Opel Manta 400
1984 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica Turbo
1985 Saeed Al Hajri/Qatar	Porsche 911 SCRS
1986 Saeed Al Hajri/Qatar	Porsche 911 SCRS
1987 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica Twincam Turbo
1988 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica Twincam Turbo
1989 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica GT4
1990 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica GT4
1991 Abbas Mosa'wi/Qatar	Mitsubishi Gallant VR4
1992 Sheikh Hamed Al Thani/Qatar	Mitsubishi Gallant VR4
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1994 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Ford Escort RS Cosworth

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ANUNCIO

A LA COLONIA ESPANOLA RESIDENTE EN JORDANIA

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Real Madrid win European basketball title

ZARAGOZA (Agencies) — Spain's Real Madrid Thursday won the European Cup after defeating Olympiakos of Greece 73-61 with

11,000 fans attending.

Fittingly it was team star Arvidas Sabonis who opened the scoring for the Spaniards with a clinical triple in the first two minutes.

He put another two points on the board 90 seconds later to give Madrid an early 7-2 lead.

Ismael Santos added another triple. Joe Arlauckas notched a two-pointer, and

before they had found their feet, Olympiakos were 12-4 down and reeling.

Johnson could find no way past the tight guarding of Javier Garcia Coll, and Alexander Volkov, a former forward with the Soviet national team, was left to lead the Greek front line.

Olympiakos slipped further behind and with a quarter of the match gone Iannidis called a time-out with the score at 20-8 in the Spaniards' favour.

After the restart the teams traded points and Olympiakos looked capable of dragging themselves back into the game until another triple from Sabonis stretched Real's Margin to 34-21, their joint-largest lead of the match.

Seconds later the Lithuanian, now mopping up under his own boards, committed his third personal foul and Obradovic pulled him back to the bench to save him for the second half.

Without him Madrid proved they were more than a one-man team and held their lead at around 10 points until the interval, when they led 38-28.

In the second half Madrid again played the better basketball but could not open up their lead against a brave Greek team who refused to lie down and die.

But as the half wore on, 4,000 Madrid fans in the Principe Felipe Stadium, backed by a further 2,000 Panathinaikos followers anxious not to see their bitter Greek rivals lift the Cup, began to sense victory.

Madrid's victory means the cup stays in Spain, after Joventut Badalona's win in Tel Aviv last year, but moves from Catalonia to the capital.

Olympiakos were left with a depressing feeling of déjà vu.

For the second year running they have lost in the final to a Spanish team, and on both occasions, the coach who masterminded their downfall was Zeljko Obradovic.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSH
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TOO MUCH TALK

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH: ♠ 5, ♥ 4 3 2, ♦ Q J 3, ♣ A J 10 2

WEST: ♠ Q J 10 9 8, ♥ 4 3 2, ♦ Q 7 6, ♣ A 10 9 8 5

EAST: ♠ 4 3 2, ♥ K J 10 5, ♦ 4 3, ♣ Q 8 6 7

SOUTH: ♠ A K 7, ♥ A 8 8, ♦ K 8 7, ♣ K 8 5 3

The bidding: South West North East 1 NT 2 ♠ 3 ♠ Pass Pass

3 NT Pass Pass Pass

West's two club overall showed at least 10 cards in any two suits. North's three-club cue-bid probed for a 4-4 major fit. After South's denial of a four-card major, three no

trump became the final contract.

Declarer allowed the queen of spades to hold the first trick, then won the continuation. A diamond to the queen won and West captured the continuation of the jack with the ace. Declarer's last spade stopper was now forced out. Next came the crucial play—declarer cashed the king of diamonds and East's discard of a heart made the hand an open book.

East was marked with the club length, so declarer led a club to the ace and continued with the jack, covered by the queen and taken by the king. The winning club was cashed and East was thrown in with the remaining club. Declarer ran the forced heart return to the queen and nine tricks rolled home.

Left alone, declarer would surely have gone wrong. To start with the technically correct play in clubs is to cash the king and then finesse, to protect against four cards in the suit with West.

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Knicks hand Bullets 13th straight loss

NEW YORK (AP) — Patrick Ewing scored 25 points as the New York Knicks beat Washington 110-100 Thursday night, the Bullets' 13th consecutive loss.

Ewing became the 37th player in NBA history to eclipse the 18,000-point mark.

Charles Smith added 19 points. Hubert Davis 17 and Greg Anthony 16 and seven assists for the Knicks, who pulled within 3 1/2 games or Orlando in the race for the best record in the eastern Conference.

Chris Webber scored 27 points to lead the Bullets, who have not won since beating Cleveland on March 17. New York led 69-48 before Washington rallied within 76-73 while Ewing sat on the bench with four fouls. The Bullets were within 86-83 with nine minutes to play when the Knicks scored nine straight points.

76ers 102, Nets 94: At Philadelphia, Dana Barros led six 76ers in double figures with 22 points and had 13 assists as the Nets were virtually eliminated from the playoffs.

Shawn Bradley had 17 points and 12 rebounds for the 76ers, his ninth double-double in his last 10 games.

Kenny Anderson had 25 points and Armon Gilliam 21 for the Nets, who are five games behind Boston for the eighth and final playoff berth with five games to play.

The Nets used an 11-0 run to close within 97-94 with 2:31 left, but Bradley scored on a follow with two minutes remaining and a free throw by Derrick Alston at 1:29 secured the victory.

Heat 85, Cavaliers 84: At Miami, Keith Askins made three free throws just before a scoreless final minute to lift the Miami, which had trailed by 16 points in the third quarter.

Glen Rice led the Heat with 22 points, while Mark Price had 20 points and

Tyrone Hill 18 points and 11 rebounds for Cleveland, which lost its eighth straight road game.

Cleveland led 84-82 when Askins made two free throws with 1:26 left. After a missed shot by Cleveland, Askins made one of two free throws with 1:05 to play for the final points of the game and the Heat's first lead since the opening period.

Miami was 13-for-17 (76.5 per cent) from the field in the fourth quarter, but made only three of eight free throws.

Jazz 121, Warriors 102: At Salt Lake City, Karl Malone had 29 points and 15 rebounds and John Stockton added 22 points as Utah pulled within 1 1/2 games of Western Conference-leading San Antonio.

The victory was Utah's 55th of the season, tying a club record set in 1990 and matched in 1992.

Tim Legler had 18 points to lead Golden State.

Utah led 66-54 at halftime and by as much as 96-69 with 25 seconds left in the third quarter. The Warriors would come no closer than 101-84 with eight minutes to play.

Celtics 119, Magic 114: At Boston, Dino Radja scored six of his 29 points in a decisive 13-3 charge down the stretch as the Celtics improved their playoff chances.

With their sixth victory in seven games, the Celtics moved 1 game ahead of Milwaukee for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Sherman Douglas had 25

points, Dee Brown and Derek Strong 18 each and Xavier McDaniel 14 for Boston.

Horace Grant had 28 points and Shaquille O'Neal 26 as the Magic lost its fourth straight road game and 12th in the last 16 on the road.

The Magic were in front 111-106 when Radja scored on a short jumper with 3:35 to go. Brown tied the score 111-111 with a 3-point shot. Radja scored inside and strong hit two free throws for a 115-111 Boston lead.

Rockets 112, Trail Blazers 99: At Houston, Hakeem Olajuwon returned after missing eight games by scoring 35 points and grabbing 10 rebounds. He and Vernon Maxwell both returned to the lineup after missing eight games with iron deficiency anemia.

Maxwell returned to locker room late in the second quarter complaining of shortness of breath and didn't return.

Clyde Drexler scored 23 points, including two crowd-pleasing dunks during the Rockets' fourth-quarter charge as an 18-4 run gave them the lead for good and their first victory in four games with Portland this season.

Rod Strickland scored 22 points to lead Portland, while Clifford Robinson had 21.

Supersonics 133, Mavericks 112: At Tacoma, Washington, Gary Payton scored 24 points and Detlef Schrempf added 22 as Seattle beat Dallas for the eighth straight time.

RESULTS

Boston 119, Orlando 114
Miami 85, Cleveland 84
New York 110, Washington 100
Philadelphia 102, New Jersey 94
Utah 121, Golden State 102
Houston 112, Portland 99
Seattle 133, Dallas 112
Denver 125, L.A. Clippers 103

Agassi, Chang on course for Japan Open clash

TOKYO (Agencies) — Andre Agassi's quarterfinal opponent said he felt like he had run a marathon chasing the angled bullets of tennis' new world No. 1.

Agassi triumphed 6-4, 6-3 Friday against Scott Draper, a 20-year-old Australian who had to win through a qualifying round to get into the \$1.2 million Japan Open.

In Saturday's semifinals, he hopes to give the running test to a more experienced foe — World No. 10 Wayne Ferreira of South Africa, who drubbed Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman 6-3, 6-2 in the quarterfinals.

"It's important that I'm playing my best tennis to win this match because he doesn't have a weakness, but he also can hit some big shots," Agassi said of Ferreira, who has one tournament victory this year, in Dubai, but hasn't beaten Agassi in four meetings.

Agassi has won three tournaments this year, including the Australian Open, and compiled a 29-2 match record through Friday.

Except for Ferreira, Saturday's final four were some of the best of American tennis, with just world No. 2 Pete Sampras — playing in Europe — and No. 11 Todd Martin absent. All four also are baseliners.

No. 2 seed Michael Chang, ranked sixth, faces fourth seed Jim Courier, ranked 15th, in the other semifinal. Chang survived a second-set match point for a 4-6, 7-6 (9-7), 6-3 victory over Sweden's Jan Apell in 2 hours, 19 minutes.

Courier let a 5-2 first-set lead slip away before putting away Sweden's Thomas Enqvist, seeded fifth, 7-6 (7-4), 6-0.

Against Agassi, Draper served strongly, hit some acrobatic volleys and retrieved well against Agassi's cannonballs, but was broken in the ninth game of the first set after four deuces and again in the seventh and ninth games of the second set.



Andre Agassi

"He has a lot of talent. He hits the ball well," Agassi said.

Agassi said his back, hurt during preparations last month for the U.S. team's Davis Cup victory over Italy, was "OK. I just have to be careful with it."

Draper came in ranked 234th in the world, but was set to move up to about No. 180 for his march to the quarterfinals here, which included a first-round upset of American Jonathan Stark, the No. 10 seed.

Draper said he was very nervous two hours before the match, but once it began "I was very happy with my mental attitude. I didn't get too nervous or overawed."

"I got a lot of experience out of it. I enjoyed being out there," he said.

But, he said, Agassi "hits incredible angles."

Chang and Apell had the crowd of 6,200 ooohing and aahing as they went at each other with spins and speed, drop shots and lobs.

"It was just a very tough match, the sort of match probably decided more by good shots than by errors," Chang said.

"I was a little bit nervous going into the tiebreak. Earlier in the week, we played a practice set and I lost to him in a tiebreak," he added.

Courier said that in the stretch where Enqvist battled back from 2-5 to force a tiebreak, "he played more aggressively and didn't miss much for a while."

But overall, he added, "I just played much better today. I was moving much better, and that made my whole game better."

Against Bjorkman, Ferreira needed only 56 minutes. Two winning lobs gave him the break he needed in the third game of the second set and he broke again in the fifth game.

Women's No. 1 seed Kimiko Date, seeking her fourth straight Japan Open title, advanced to the final with a 6-1, 6-2 victory over injured

just 56 minutes to dispose of American Tami Whitlinger Jones 6-2, 6-1, to earn a semifinal berth at the \$430,000 Houston women's tennis championships.

"I felt I was in control of the points," said the top-seeded Graf, who kept her 1995 match record perfect at 16-0. "I was playing pretty aggressive and I think that worked pretty well for me."

"I'm feeling great on clay and I didn't know if I would before the tournament," the 25-year-old German said. "But I've been feeling so good on the court after two matches. I feel in control of the points. I feel like I'm moving well, and have the patience. I'm feeling good."

Graf awaits the winner of the quarter-final clash between defending champion Sabine Hack and 18-year-old qualifier Nino Loursabishvili of Georgia.

The fifth-seeded Hack overcame the Pesky Moor ball style of American qualifier Erika Delone 6-4, 7-5 to reach the quarters. Seventh seed Sandra Cecchini of Italy and unseeded Wiltrud Probst of Germany also gained the quarterfinals.

Cecchini beat Spain's Maria Sanchez Lopez 6-1, 6-7 (1-7), 6-2, in a two hour, 24 minute baseline battle while Probst defeated compatriot Meike Babel 5-7, 7-5, 6-2.

"Yeah, I won ugly today," said Hack after her one hour, 38 minute struggle. "It doesn't always have to be pretty, I guess. But I'm pretty satisfied."

Hack rallied from down 0-3 in the first set, and 1-3 in the second before beating the 180th-ranked Delone.

"It was pretty frustrating because I haven't played those kind of players in a long time, and she played without pace," said Hack, ranked 28th.

"Usually I play topspin players and it's a hard ball, but that's a job and kind of slow. So I got really impatient and frustrated, you could probably tell by my body language."

compatriot Nana Miyagi, the No. 8 seed.

American Amy Frazier, seeded second, meets qualifier Tang Min of Hong Kong on Saturday to decide the other finalist.

Miyagi said she pulled a groin muscle Thursday in her 1-6, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Italy's Rita Grande.

"She (Date) kept me on the run all the time. I wasn't serving great either. ... If I could have run a little better I could have given her a good match."

The men's singles winner receives \$156,000 from total prize money of \$1.2 million. The women's division offers only a \$25,000 top prize.

Graf makes short work of a long night

In Houston, Texas, world No. 1 Steffi Graf made short work of a long night on Thursday.

After waiting more than two hours as the day programme ran long, Graf needed

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POLSERVICE offers managements, maintenance and training programmes for technical and managerial staff. POLSERVICE designs most of its equipment to allow for local manufacture, and thus facilitate both transfer of technology and price savings.

Osama AL-Qaryouti Engineering office represented by its General Director Eng. Osama Al-Qaryouti has signed an Eng. Cooperation Agreement with POLSERVICE which was signed by its representative in Syria and Lebanon Mr. Juhaisz Hebel on 28-11-94 at Amra Hotel in the presence of Polish Ambassador in Amman and Commercial Counsellor in the Polish Embassy to cooperate in projects needed such mentioned experiences at Joint-Venture bases. Osama Al-Qaryouti Eng. office is classified as a consulting office in Structural Eng., Architectural Eng., Heating and Conditioning, Power Electrical, Roads, Highways Water Sewage and Construction management since 1991 and it was qualified in group B to participate in Governmental Tenders.

بول سرفيس شركة بولندية رائدة في مجال الخدمات الهندسية والاستشارية، تأسست سنة ١٩٦١، وتمتلك شركة بول سرفيس خبرة عالية واسعة في مجالات تقنية وإمداد المياه، الصرف الصحي، معالجة مياه الصرف الصحي والصناعي، معالجة القمامة والنفايات الصلبة، محطات الطاقة وتجهيزاتها، الري والمشاريع الزراعية، المشاريع الصناعية، النقل، المشاريع الطبية، الاتصالات، التطوير الحضري وتخطيط المدن. وتقوم بول سرفيس بتقديم خدمات التشغيل والصيانة بالإضافة الى برامج لتدريب الفنيين والعاملين، وتراعي بول سرفيس في تصميم معانيها ان توفر امكانية تصنيعها محلياً، مما يساعد على نقل التكنولوجيا وتخفيض التكلفة. وقد قام مكتب المهندس اسامة القريوتي ممثلاً بمديره العام المهندس اسامة القريوتي بتوقيع اتفاقية تعاون هندسية مع بول سرفيس حيث وقعها عن الشركة السيد جوليوس هيبيل ممثلاً في سوريا ولبنان وذلك بتاريخ ٩٤/١١/٢٨ في فندق عمره بحضور السفير البولندي في عمان والملحق التجاري في السفارة البولندية للصلاون في المشاريع ذات الحاجة لكل هذه الخبرات المذكورة على اساس اتصالات هندسية، خاصة وان مكتب م. اسامة القريوتي مصنف لدى نقابة المهندسين الاردنيين كمكتب هندسي استشاري في اختصاصات الهندسة الانشائية، عمارة الابنية، كهرباء القوى، تلفه وتكييف، الطرق، المياه والمخاري وادارة المشاريع منذ عام ١٩٩١ و مؤهل لدى دائرة الطعانات الحكومية في وزارة الاشغال العامة بالدرجة (ب) اذنية للتعليم للطعانات الحكومية.

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Rabin: Assad wants more than Sadat got in return for peace

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was quoted in an interview published on Friday as saying he thought Syria was trying to get more from peace talks with Israel than Egypt did in a 1979 peace treaty.

Israel returned to Egypt all of the territory it seized from it in the 1967 Middle East war. In that war Israel also took the Golan Heights from Syria. Peace talks between Israel and Syria are stalled over the heights.

"I have a suspicion that (Syrian President Hafez Al) Assad wants to prove that he can get for peace more than (former Egyptian President Anwar) Sadat did," Israeli Haaretz newspaper quoted Mr. Rabin as saying.

"It's possible that he has to explain to himself and maybe also to others, why he rejected Sadat's proposal in '77 to come with him to Jerusalem," Mr. Rabin said.

Mr. Rabin and Mr. Assad demanded security arrangements of equal depth on both sides of a future peace border.

"We have no intention at the moment to commit to Syria what Sadat got, and certainly no intention of discussing at all seriously the demand for geographic equality in security arrangements."

"Israel will not make any substantial concessions to allow the restart of negotiations with Syria," he told Haaretz.

Syria wants demilitarisation to cover an equal area on both sides, a call which Israel rejects on the grounds it is a far smaller country. Damas-

cus is holding up the resumption of high-level military talks before a security deal.

Ambassador-level talks resumed last month to try to agree on security arrangements. The United States as the chief sponsor of the Middle East peace process had hoped the army chiefs would soon join the negotiations.

But Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said Thursday that the army chiefs would "not go to Washington to take part in the negotiations" because there has been no agreement on security arrangements.

Syria's position was not a "mark of stubbornness," Mr. Sharaa said. "No state can ask another to abandon this principle of equality which is internationally recognised."

On Friday, Mr. Rabin called on Japan to contribute to the Middle East peace process as he met Friday with a Japanese fact-finding mission touring the region.

"Any Japanese contribution to strengthening peace and security in the Middle East will be welcome, especially if it goes to parties which have signed peace accords: Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians," said Mr. Rabin, quoted by officials.

The delegation, which includes representatives of Japan's three ruling coalition parties, is in the region to investigate the possible deployment of Japanese troops as part of U.N. peacekeeping forces on the Golan Heights.

Mr. Rabin praised the "positive role" played by the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force, deployed on the Golan since 1974.

Militants kill 6 in attack on crowded Egypt street

MINYA (AFP) — Militants killed six people, including a child and two women, when they sprayed a crowded main street with automatic weapons fire in a southern Egyptian village on Friday, police said.

The attack, one of the bloodiest against civilians since a wave of violence began in 1992, brought to 736 the number of people killed since March 1992.

Three gunmen belonging to the outlawed Gamaa Al Islamiya opened fire just before weekly noon prayers on the main shopping street of Naway village, 300 kilometres south of Cairo in troubled Minya province, police said.

The street, which has been the scene of several attacks since militants began focusing their activities in Minya late 1994.

The attackers first shot dead a village guard, Sabar Mahmoud Al-Hakim, before killing Hosni Ali Ibrahim, a plumber who tried to stop their escape.

When people on the street rushed at the assailants they sprayed automatic weapons fire indiscriminately, killing a three-year-old girl, Asma Hassan Sayed, and Coptic Christian woman, Abia Nashid Tawfik.

Another woman, Fathiya Abdul Halim, and her brother Ramadan were also killed in the gunfire.

The three militants were

masked and succeeded in escaping into nearby sugarcane fields at either end of the street.

However, witnesses recognised the three as villagers known for their connection to the Gamaa — Nasser Hassan Akram, Mohammad Tawfik and a third identified only as Rabia, police said.

The harvesting of sugarcane since December and the destruction of fields by police have forced the militants to come out of their hiding places and carry out attacks in towns and villages.

Meanwhile, another militant group, the Taleh Al Fatah, has threatened more attacks after 42 of its members, arrested in the Mediterranean port of Alexandria and the Nile Delta in December, went on trial Thursday in Cairo.

The armed wing of the group Al Jihad warned in a statement sent to Al Hayat newspaper that it "will not stand by in silence with its arms folded."

Two of its members are accused of the murder of a policeman and two Coptic Christians in February last year, while the others face charges of belonging to an illegal organisation and possessing arms.

Twenty-two members have been sentenced to death since December 1992 and more than half of them have already been executed.



Palestinian Catholics carry a cross during the Good Friday procession reenacting the crucifixion of Jesus Christ through Jerusalem's Via Dolorosa (AFP photo)

Thousands retrace Christ's route

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Thousands of Christians, some lugging heavy wooden crosses, others video cameras, marched through Jerusalem's walled Old City on Good Friday to retrace Christ's steps towards crucifixion.

Pilgrims and brown-robed monks passed along the Via Dolorosa — Way of Sorrow — kneeling in prayer at the 14 stations marking Christ's suffering.

They converged at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the reputed site of Jesus' crucifixion, burial and resurrection. Latin Canticles sung by Franciscan monks mixed with a cacophony of hymns in a multitude of languages. The sounds echoed through the cavernous 12th century basilica.

"Praise the Lord. Let Christ be risen," sang out a group of Palestinian Christians. "This is where Jesus fell. Ours is the suffering he bore. Ours the suffering he carried."

This year's ritual came amid heightened tension following a wave of attacks on Israelis by militants. Israel sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip to prevent violence, which meant only a few hundred Palestinian Christians with special per-

mits reached Friday's procession.

"It's not right that Christians should not be allowed to come," said Ibrahim Kandafat, in charge of Christian affairs in Yasser Arafat's self-rule government.

"This is a holy day and we would like to see all believers allowed to come on a holy day."

Major Elise Shazar, spokeswoman for Israel's military government in the West Bank, said permits were given to all Palestinian Christians who applied. She said she did not know how many entry permits were issued.

Additional police were deployed throughout Arab East Jerusalem, and hundreds of paramilitary border policemen flanked the Good Friday procession.

Many visiting Christians appeared unaware of the conflict, and Jerusalem's Old City was packed with pilgrims from the United States, Africa and Europe. Also visiting were U.N. troops stationed in Lebanon and the Golan Heights, their blue berets standing out against the yellow stone buildings.

Keith Compton, a retired civil servant from Sydney, Australia, heaved a solid wood cross onto his shoulder. "This is tremendous. We

are following in Christ's footsteps, in his agony, it is one thing to do it in your own church, but it hasn't got the same depth of feeling as being in the actual spot," Mr. Compton said.

This year's large crowds contrasted with the trickle of tourists who came during the 1987-1993 Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule in the occupied lands. Tourism has boomed since Palestinians and Israelis reached a peace accord in 1993.

In a sign of Israel's improving relations with the Muslim World, a group of pilgrims from Indonesia took part in the procession. The pilgrims said they had wanted to come for years but were only now given permission by their government.

The pilgrims moved past Arab merchants selling souvenirs, such as miniature crucifixes, rosaries and crowns of thorns.

"There are lots of people, but they don't shop. Good Friday is good for the soul, but bad for business," said merchant Adnan Dakkak.

A group of American tourists from La Brea, California, reenacted Christ's last journey. One wore a crown of thorns, his arms covered with fake blood. He was accompanied by two whip-carrying "Roman soldiers."

France, U.S. accuse Milosevic of blocking peace proposal

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — France joined the United States on Friday in accusing Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic of frustrating international peace efforts in Bosnia.

Public statements by the two countries were seen as an admission by the big power contact group, of which they are members, that it had failed to persuade Mr. Milosevic to back their latest plan to end the Bosnian war.

His refusal to cooperate is a blow to United Nations hopes of extending a truce ceasefire between Bosnian Muslims and Serbs which expires in a fortnight.

French foreign ministry spokesman Richard Duple told reporters in Paris: "President Milosevic bears responsibility for the degradation of the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We continue to run up against an obstinate position on his part."

Mr. Milosevic met envoys of the contact group countries — which also include Britain, Russia and Germany

— this week but rebuffed their offer to suspend sanctions against Yugoslavia in return for his recognition of Bosnia and Croatia.

The Serbian leader, who has recently been treated respectfully by the contact group as a potential peacemaker, wants sanctions lifted without conditions.

U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said on Thursday: "It is our assumption that he is not interested in (the plan)."

Meanwhile, Bosnian Serbs are brutally expelling more Muslim civilians from their homes and subjecting peacekeepers to unacceptable harassment, officials complained Friday.

Earlier, a French peacekeeper died after being shot by a sniper while travelling through a front-line neighbourhood Friday morning.

On Thursday night, Serbs fired on French peacekeepers at a U.N. observation post, drawing return fire.

Even as Bosnia's battle-

fields quieted temporarily Friday, accusations of human rights violations and attempted Serb intimidation of the United Nations grew louder.

Over the last three days, about 100 Muslim women, children and elderly have been rounded up from their homes in Bijeljina, in Serb-held northeastern Bosnia. After being robbed, they were forced to walk through snow and across front lines, to government-held Tuzla, said Nina Winkvist, a spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). One elderly man died of exhaustion.

Ms. Winkvist quoted aid workers in Bijeljina as saying Muslims were still being rounded up and more expulsions were expected, despite ICRC demands that they stop.

The White House said Friday that Iran might be the source of a new flood of arms to the Muslim-led Bosnian government, but denied that the United States was winking at the resupply effort.

100 dead in Russian bombing in Afghanistan

TALOQAN (Agencies) — Dozens of shops were razed and several houses destroyed in a Russian air attack Thursday on this northern Afghan city that left more than 200 people killed and wounded, officials said Friday.

Afghan officials and local residents, largely confirming figures broadcast on Thursday by Afghan radio, said around 100 people died in the raids while more than 120 were wounded.

At least eight Russian Sukhoi SU-27 jets dropped 24 bombs including some cluster bombs and also fired 12 rockets on Talqan, capital of northern Takhar province, local police commander Pir Mohammad said.

The bombing was the heaviest since the Russians supporting the government in the neighbouring former Soviet republic of Tajikistan, launched attacks this week on bases of alleged Tajik rebels operating on Afghan soil.

Residents said at least two columns of shops were destroyed and the bazaar was deserted.

The jets also hit government buildings, including the provincial finance department and the local police headquarters, they said.

Takhar province, bordering Tajikistan, is located 380 kilometres north of Kabul. Its provincial centre, Talqan, is only 60 kilometres from the border.

There have been numerous reports of Russian air strikes in northern Afghanistan in recent years, but Thursday's attack was perhaps the most intense.

The planes dropped bombs and fired rockets on the town at around 6:45 a.m. Thursday, residents said. All of the casualties were civilians, and most were in the market, which already was busy despite the early hour, they added.

Dr. Mustafa Kemal at Talqan hospital said there were at least 60 dead and 120 injured. Others put the figure higher.

In the hospital's casualty ward, Baba Khan lay in a coma, a bloodied bandage round his head wound.

"He was riding his bicycle in the bazaar when the bombs fell," said his brother, Mohammad. "He was hit by a piece of shrapnel in the head. I pray he will be all right."

In the market, residents dug through the rubble to salvage belongings and make sure there were no more buried bodies.

Blacksmith Musa Nazar stood on a pile of rubble that had once been his shop.

"This is all I have to show for more than 40 years work," he said. "They (the Russian forces) are inhuman, they are against Islam and the poor."

The raid came after a reported escalation in cross-border attacks by rebels battling Tajikistan's Moscow-backed neo-communist government.

The bombing also followed an official Russian protest to Kabul Wednesday accusing the Afghan government of allowing Tajik rebels use of its territory for military operations against the former Soviet republic.

Iran greatest threat to stability — Clinton

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President Bill Clinton warned Thursday that Iran still posed the biggest threat to stability in the Middle East and that he was considering stronger sanctions against Tehran.

"We are looking at what all our options are. I think we need to be as firm as we can be," he said in a CNN interview.

He noted that the U.S. administration recently blocked an oil deal between Iran and the U.S. oil company Conoco for production from an offshore well in the Straits of Hormuz.

He said he was about to receive a report on what other measures could be taken to isolate Iran, which Washington accuses of seeking to become a nuclear power and supporting terrorism.

"Every country that we speak with... world leader I talk to in the region and beyond still believes that Iran is the biggest cause of instability and the biggest potential threat to the future," he said.

"They have chosen not to change their conduct, so we are forced to continue to look at our options," he added.

Washington is considering a complete embargo on Iranian oil exports to U.S. companies. Iran's biggest customers buy crude that the crude and then sell it to European countries.

Republican Senator Alfonse D'Amato has also proposed a total trade embargo against Iran, but the administration has argued that it

would have little effect unless other countries signed on.

In Tehran Thursday, President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani demanded Washington end its campaign to isolate his country.

"American leaders must reconsider their poor interpretations and mistaken action as well as their historic errors on the subject of Iran," Mr. Rafsanjani said in a radio and television address.

He added that Iran was "ready at any moment which it judges appropriate to break off all economic ties with the United States."

The Iranian president also slammed U.S. efforts "to establish economic ties with Iran while it clumsily puts pressure on others to secure the breaking-off of their ties with us."

His comments came shortly after Iran marked the 15th anniversary of the end of diplomatic ties with the United States.

Washington broke off relations on April 9, 1980, following the taking of 53 American hostages at the U.S. embassy in the Iranian capital shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution.

In 1994 direct and indirect trade between the U.S. and Iran climbed above \$4 billion while American companies buy close to a third of Iranian crude oil.

A U.S. official said meanwhile despite repeated rejections, the United States will keep pressing Russia to abandon a nuclear reactor deal with Iran.



Comedian talks to Pope posing as a Canadian PM

MONTREAL (R) — A Quebec comedian said that he was able to talk to Pope John Paul II for 18 minutes by pretending to be Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien. Pierre Brassard said he spoke to the Pope Tuesday in a telephone call broadcast on radio and, mimicking Mr. Chretien, told the Pontiff that he intended to amend the constitution to assure Canadians the right to life.

The Pope supposedly replied: "I hope that will help us during the (women's) conference in Peking." "Would you be prepared to come to Canada?" Mr. Brassard asked. "Not right now," the Pope said, laughing. After asking the Pope when he would install a toy propeller on his cap, Mr. Brassard finally admitted that he was not a prime minister, but a radio announcer. The Pope chuckled and blessed Canada.

USA Today reported the prank in its Thursday edition under the headline "radio station makes crank call to Pope." "I swear it's true. We wouldn't pull a hoax like that," Mr. Brassard told Reuters at CKOI-FM, a French-language Montreal radio station that broadcast the 18-minute phone call.

Mr. Brassard, a member of Blue Powder, a troupe of comedians, said the radio station has made edited copies of the telephone call available for laboratory testing. It has also asked the telephone utility for its phone records to prove the call was actually placed to the Vatican.

UPI violated human rights by firing lesbian, judge rules

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A federal judge ruled that the U.S.-based service United Press International (UPI) violated human rights law by sacking a reporter after discovering she was a lesbian. Lawyers for UPI failed to turn up in court here to defend the news service against a lawsuit by Julie Brienza and Judge Joyce Green ruled against the company by default. Brienza, 33, was dismissed by UPI on April 28, 1990 and the company said at the time she had been fired because she violated staff regulations about freelance writing for other publications.

Brienza asserted in her lawsuit however that she was fired because the news service had buckled under pressure from a religious broadcaster who urged listeners to flood UPI with calls complaining about her. UPI, contacted by AFP, had no immediate comment on the ruling but noted that the dismissal of the reporter occurred under previous ownership of the company. Under Green's ruling, UPI was ordered to expunge Brienza's personnel records of references to her sacking and replace them with a statement saying she left the company "for reasons best known by Ms. Brienza... but not for cause."

"What's important is that the court showed a willingness to hold a large corporation accountable for sexual orientation discrimination," said Suzanne Goldberg, an attorney with a gay rights group that helped Brienza with her case.

Dentist fined for refusing to treat HIV patient

MONTREAL (AFP) — A dental surgeon who refused to treat an HIV positive patient was fined \$2,200 for damages, judicial sources said. The human rights court Judge Michele Rivest also ruled that the dentist would have to accept patients with AIDS or the HIV virus which causes the disease in the future unless the ailment is beyond his treatment capacity. The plaintiff went to the dental clinic in 1991 and wrote on his admission form that he was HIV positive. The clinic then refused to treat him for a toothache. In the 60-page ruling, the court said the dentist's refusal to accept the patient's condition was a real risk it could not accept the dentist's argument that the "right to life, liberty and personal security" of his clinic had precedence over the right to receive a health service free of discrimination based on a handicap.

"Jordan Week" in Japan — a landmark in efforts to enhance ties

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian public and private sectors are expected to be represented in strength and the Kingdom's political positions and economic, social and cultural developments will be highlighted during a week-long event in Tokyo scheduled to be held next month.

The May 21-28 "Jordan Week" in the Japanese capital is the first-ever such Jordanian event in the Far East and is widely seen as the best opportunity yet for the Kingdom to present itself internationally and highlight the opportunities available here in a state of peace in the Middle East.

The event is also highly timely since it comes after Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty, ending nearly five decades of hostility that had largely dissuaded many international firms from coming in strong into the region, and ahead of the Amman economic summit to be held in October.

The Jordan Week in Japan will also mark the launching of direct Amman-Tokyo flights by Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national carrier.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, underlined the importance of the Jordan Week in Japan when he said at celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of the Jordan-Japan Friendship Association early this month that "Jordan rarely had the chance to receive such exposure."

The association, with consistent support from the Crown Prince, has contributed strongly to developing Jordanian-Japanese relations since its establishment 20 years ago, noted Sharif Jamil Ben Nasser, president of the association.

"We have always considered that the personal relationship between the two royal houses and the mutual respect that they share is the foundation of friendship between Jordan

and Japan," Sharif Jamil said in an address at the anniversary celebrations, which were attended by Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath and a large audience including senior officials and members of the association.

The Jordan-Japan Friendship Association, Sharif Jamil said, "has tried in a very humble way to expand upon this solid foundation and increase the knowledge between both peoples."

"This has not always been easy as Jordan and Japan are separated by many miles and oceans, geographically, culturally, linguistically and religiously," he added.

Bridging this gap is precisely one of the main objectives of the Jordan Week, said the Japanese ambassador to Jordan, Yuji Ikeda.

"Our bilateral relationship is entering a mature state in which the two countries are moving away from a predominantly

economy-oriented stage to a stage of political dialogue pursuing common goals of regional and global management," said Mr. Ikeda.

Sharif Jamil, who is also honorary president of the National Committee for the Jordan Week in Japan, described the event as a national endeavour "which will undoubtedly give a strong boost to bilateral relations and strengthen ties at the political, economic, cultural, scientific and touristic levels."

Sharif Jamil also noted that the Jordan Week was being organised as Tokyo and Amman were marking the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Jordan and Japan.

According to a schedule made available to the Jordan Times by the national committee in charge of organising the Jordan Week in Tokyo, the event will include:

— A conference entitled "Peace and Beyond," focussing on the role of

Jordan and Japan.

The keynote speech will be given by Prince Hassan at the conference, which will be held at the United Nations University in Tokyo under the auspices of the Jordanian Institute of Diplomacy, the Middle East Institute of Japan, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan-Jordan Friendship Association.

After the conference, a Tokyo declaration will be issued to act as a guideline for future joint endeavours in all fields.

— A Jordanian exhibition to be held at Seibu department store in Tokyo. This will include a picture and antiques exhibit, a handicrafts exhibit and various products of Jordan.

— A Jordan Festival to be held at the Yokohama InterContinental Hotel, including a reception to mark Jordan's Independence Day.

The Royal Jordanian folklore group will perform during the event. Five chefs

from the InterContinental Hotel in Amman will organise a Jordan food fair.

— Royal Jordanian will also assist with all the logistics required for the success of the Jordan Week. There are 18 million Japanese tourists that visit various countries each year and the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism has contributed with the Jordan Association of Travel Agents to establish contacts and a dialogue with their counterparts in Japan to increase the number of Japanese visitors to Jordan.

— The Jordanian Armed Forces Band will also give performances, pending final arrangements, in Ginza-Tokyo and the Royal Jordanian Air Force will provide a C-130 aircraft to assist in the transport of personnel and equipment to Tokyo and back.

The National Committee for the Jordan Week in Japan, established by a prime ministerial decree and entrusted with all preparations pertaining to the

event, has also been raising funds for the event.

It has held meetings with Jordanian companies that have business affiliations in Japan, including the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company, the Arab Potash Company, the Jordan Cement Factories, the Arab Bank, the Housing Bank, and the Jordanian Association of Travel Agents. It also contacted members of private sector organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Industry and the Jordan Businessmen's Association to assist in funding and to establish the number of Jordanians from the private sector that wish to travel to Japan to participate in the Jordan Week.

"We must recognise the generosity of our interlocutors and counterparts in Japan and we must live up to our responsibilities in terms of the quality of Jordanian representation to ensure the success of the Jordan Week in Japan," Prince Hassan has said.